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Daily Report

Central Eurasia

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Central Asian Foreign Ministers Arrive in Dushanbe

LD1403142694 Dushanbe Radio Tajikistan Network in Tajik 1200 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] The foreign ministers of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan have arrived in Tajikistan today. A meeting of the foreign ministers of the five CIS states will take place at the Foreign Ministry of Tajikistan tomorrow.

Uzbek Foreign Minister Saidmukhtar Saidkasymov, Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev, Kazakh Foreign Minister Tuleutay Suleymenov, Tajik Foreign Minister Rashid Olimov, and Kyrgyz Deputy Prime Minister Alifbek Tefshenkulov will take part at this meeting.

The main issues to be discussed at the meeting are the situation on the Tajik-Afghan border and the activity of the peacekeeping forces there.

Emomali Rakhmonov, the head of state and chairman of the Supreme Council of Tajikistan, will meet them tomorrow. Russian Foreign Minister Kozyrev will arrive in Dushanbe, the capital of our country, tomorrow.

Opposition Prepared To End Fighting

LD1403201694 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1746 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] The Tajik armed opposition will stop fighting if peace talks between Dushanbe and the opposition are successful, Chairman of the Coordinating Center of Tajik Democratic Forces Atakhon Latifi told Interfax on Monday.

He said the opposition is not interested in a continuation of the civil war and does not want Tajikistan to become another Afghanistan. Latifi noted that currently preparations for the talks are going on. The talks will be held in Moscow, however the exact date is yet unknown.

Asked by Interfax's correspondent what demands the opposition put forward before the Dushanbe authorities, Latifi noted that the Council of National Accord, consisting of people who have not been involved in the civil war, should come to power temporarily. In Latifi's opinion, this government should conduct preparations for elections of a new parliament and do everything possible for the return of a million and a half refugees to their homeland.

Latifi pointed out that only after that it would be possible to hold elections and adopt a new constitution.

Kozyrev Confident of Success in Talks

LD1503100494 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 0900 GMT 15 Mar 94

[Text] Russia intends to do everything possible to facilitate the negotiations between the leadership of Tajikistan and the opposition, Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev declared on arrival in Dushanbe from Vladivostok today. Another important task for Russia is to support Tajikistan as a CIS state, the minister said.

Kozyrev is meeting in Dushanbe today with the Tajik foreign minister and the foreign ministers of a number of other Central Asian states. He pointed out in particular that there must be no wrecking of the negotiations with the opposition as happened last week following the killing of Deputy Prime Minister Nazarshoyev. Kozyrev is convinced that, together with the Tajik leadership, he will succeed in settling this issue, INTERFAX reports.

Foreign Ministers Hold Meetings

LD1503070694 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0618 GMT 15 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Galina Gridneva and Aleksandr Kharchenko]

[Text] Dushanbe, 15 Mar—Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev arrived in Dushanbe today to take part in the conference of heads of foreign policy departments of the Central Asian Republics and Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation. Consultative meetings of the foreign ministers of Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan also began this morning.

The consultative meetings are being held behind closed doors, but it is known that according to the preliminary agenda the participants in the conference are to discuss the political situation in Tajikistan and around it and also prospects for getting a dialogue under way. After the conference its participants will be received by Tajik Supreme Soviet Chairman Emomali Rakhmonov.

This morning it is also envisaged that Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev will make a trip to one of the sectors of the Tajik-Afghan border. After the trip he will have a conversation face-to-face with head of Tajikistan Emomali Rakhmonov.

Meet With Troop Commanders

LD1503093294 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0802 GMT 15 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Aleksandr Kharchenko and Andrey Chytov]

[Text] Dushanbe March 15 TASS— The foreign ministers of Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan are conferring with the commander of the collective peacekeeping force in Tajikistan, Colonel-General Boris Pyankov and the commander of the Russian contingent of border troops in Tajikistan, Lieutenant-General Anatoliy Chechulin.

The plenary meeting, which began in the government residence in Dushanbe on Tuesday morning, has heard reports of General Pyankov and Chechulin about the situation on the Tajik-Afghan border, in and around the republic.

The plenary session was followed by talks in a narrower format, including between Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev and Tajik Foreign Minister Rashid Olimov.

A Russian delegation member told ITAR-TASS the ministers have not yet decided whether or what documents should be adopted as a result of their meeting.

Generals Pyankov and Chechulin told journalists that the possibility of a intra-Tajik dialogue was discussed in general, but he did not rule out the possibility of talks between the Dushanbe government and the opposition in March and April.

Andrey Kozyrev is due to fly to the 12th border post of the Pyanj border group, where two attempts of penetrating Tajikistan from Afghanistan were reported last night.

Later today Kozyrev is due to meet Tajikistan's leader Emomali Rakhmonov for one-to-one talks.

Dushanbe Talks End

LD1503131694 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1215 GMT 15 Mar 94

[Text] The meeting of Russian and Central Asian foreign ministers that was held behind closed doors ended in Dushanbe Tuesday at noon. A communique on the meeting and numerous bilateral agreements between the foreign ministries are expected to be signed in the afternoon.

Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev left Dushanbe by plane, probably for the 12th border post of the Pyanj unit on the Tajik-Afghan border.

CIS Officials Meet in Minsk 11 Mar

LD1403190294 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1653 GMT 14 Mar 94

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature No. 49: Compiled by Nikolay Zherebtsov, Andrey Petrovskiy, edited by Vladimir Shishlin]

[Text] On March 11 Chairman of the Belarusian Supreme Council Mechyslaw Hryb met with permanent representatives of the republics and heads of the CIS executive secretariats' subdivisions at the CIS headquarters in Minsk.

In an interview with Interfax, the Executive Secretary of the Commonwealth Ivan Korotchenya said that "the meeting which was later joined by the Belarusian Prime Minister Vyacheslav Kebich was of a familiarizing character." According to Korotchenya, the new head of the parliament decided to familiarize with representatives of the CIS states in person and to hear their opinion on the activities of the executive secretariat.

Kortochenya said that during the meeting Hryb expressed readiness to propose at the next CIS summit the construction of a new building for the Commonwealth headquarters in Minsk. The blue prints have already been designed, and the city authorities have found a suitable construction site. Kebich decided that the building of the former regional committee of the Belarusian Communist Party will be leased by the CIS Executive Secretariat, which currently occupies the building.

In the opinion of Korotchenya, the meeting focused on approaches to the preparations and the signing of an agreement between the Belarusian government and the CIS Executive Secretariat which, in his words, regulates "a whole set of problems regarding the location of the CIS headquarters in Minsk and the recognition by Belarus of the executive secretariat as an international organization." "Hryb also expressed the readiness of the Belarusian side to carry out the construction of the administrative building and apartment houses under the condition that there was a coordinated approach by the CIS states to their financing," Korotchenya said.

Asked about the funding of the CIS Executive Secretariat, Korotchenya said that "some states delay the remittance of money for maintaining the coordinating structures of the Commonwealth," declining to name them.

According to Korotchenya, "the date for the next CIS summit, to be held approximately around April 18-19 in Moscow is being discussed."

Interfax learned that Hryb and Korotchenya intend to take part in a conference of the European Interparliamentary Union scheduled for March 21-26 in Paris.

According to sources in the Belarusian Supreme Council, a delegation of the CIS Interparliamentary Assembly to the Paris conference will be led by head of the Russian Federation Council Vladimir Shumeyko.

The agenda of the conference will include a discussion of the role and means of the UN in the prevention of international conflicts, environmental protection, as well as general debates on the political, economic and social situation in the world.

ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 15 Mar

LD1503065994 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0631 GMT 15 Mar 94

["Press Review"—ITAR-TASS headline]

[Text] Moscow March 15 TASS—ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI on the decree, signed by President Boris Yeltsin on March 10, on respondibility for infringing the labour rights of citizens". The decree envisages, in particular, punishment for those guilty of delays in the payment of wages and salaries.

"Failure to pay wages, like rust, erodes the entire economic mechanism. It has ceased to be risky and has become an economically lucrative thing not to foot bills".

ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI comments on a draft memorandum on civil peace and accord. Preparation of such a memo was the subject of the Russian president's meeting with representatives from parties and public movements, the parliament and government in the Kremlin recently.

"However, can a document, even such a substantial and representative as this one, keep the country from slipping down into chaos?" the newspaper asks and provides the answer: "It is unlikely. All depends on whether the leading political and public forces of the country that have influence among the masses really intend to make every effort to maintain civil peace or this is just a tactical manoeuvre for someone".

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA (RED STAR) runs a column of replies, under the general headline "The State has a Future if the Rising Generation Chooses Patriotism", by participants in a recent roundtable meeting here about the education of young people in the spirit of patriotism.

"Our country has got a kind of 'black hole' in this respect, with cruelty, cynicism, all-crushing nihilism, and the lack of spirituality drifting in from it".

RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA on the problems of children's homes, orphanages and special schools.

"Ninety per cent less attention is now given to children in boarding schools than during the stagnation period".

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA carries an interview with outstanding chess player Anatoliy Karpov who said, in view of his triumph in Linares: "To me, the triumph in the tournament is both an honour and self- affirmation as world champion and an evidence of unabated strength".

NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA maintains that the Russian Federation's accession to NATO's Partnership-for-Peace programme "would enhance russia's isolation and sharply limit its freedom for foreign-policy manoeuvring".

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA, touching upon the forthcoming 8th international aerospace show, the Fidae-94, to be held in the capital of Chile on March 20-27, quotes Axel Cabrera, Chilean consul in the Russian Federation, as saying that the success of the Fidae-94 "is predetermined by Russia's participation".

TRUD analyses the causes of the failure of the Georgian-Abkhazian talks on a political settlement of the conflict. The newspaper sees a real way out of the crisis in Abkhazia's signing a confederative treaty with Georgia, a treaty under which each side would be declared sovereign and a subject of international law.

PRAVDA runs an interview with Tajikistan Parliament Chief Emomali Rakhmonov who believes that his country should have armed forces of its own. SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA carries an interview with writer Yuriy Bondarev on the eve of his 70th birthday. The newspaper singles out the writer's words "that Russia has its own path in world history, a unique one achieved through suffering".

Yeltsin Cancels Meeting With Japanese Foreign Minister

LD1503123794 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1051 GMT 15 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vyacheslav Bantin]

[Text] Tokyo March 15 TASS—The expected meeting between Japan's Minister of Foreign Affairs Tsutomu Hata and Russian President Boris Yeltsin has been cancelled, Kyodo TSUSHIN news agency reported today, citing source in the Japanese Foreign Ministry.

Tsutomu Hata, who arrives in Moscow on March 19, will hold talks with Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev.

Boris Yeltsin will be unable to receive the Japanese minister, because he is out of Moscow for a vacation in the Black Sea coast resort of Sochi.

Visit Said Unaffected by Yeltsin's Absence

LD1503142594 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1319 GMT 15 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondents Boris Krivoshey and Dmitriy Chubarov]

[Text] Moscow, 15 Mar—Tsutomu Hata, the Japanese foreign minister, is to pay an official visit to Russia in the next few days, Grigoriy Karasin, the head of the department of press and information of the Russian Foreign Ministry, told Itar-Tass today.

In the words of the Russian diplomat, "the holiday of Russian President Boris Yeltsin, who is in Sochi, will in no way affect the political content and the level of the official visit by the Japanese foreign minister."

The program of the visit, Grigoriy Karasin added, shows that Russia attaches great significance to its relations with Japan. During his stay in Russia, the Japanese minister is expected to meet Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev.

Official on Nuke Waste Dumping in Sea of Japan

LD1403172194 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1547 GMT 14 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Vadim Byrkin and Mikhail Karlov]

[Excerpts] Moscow, 14 Mar—The dumping of liquid radioactive waste into the Sea of Japan by vessels of the Pacific Fleet will only be carried out with the permission of the Russian Government. The Russian Naval Forces press center said this today in response to a request by an ITAR-TASS correspondent for a comment on a report by the Japanese paper MAINICHI.

The paper reported today, citing Valeriy Danilyan, the chief of the Pacific Fleet Chemical Service, that Russia could resume the dumping of waste in the Sea of Japan in May this year unless foreign countries, including Japan, provided financial help with building facilities to use and store liquid radioactive waste. The Russian Naval Forces press center said that this was the personal view of one of the Pacific Fleet leaders. However, the government has so far not made a decision on the dumping of waste in the Sea of Japan. [passage omitted]

Only the use of special facilities for rendering the waste harmless can solve the problem. A Finance Ministry representative recently said at a session of a government commission that the issue of allocating money for these problems will be resolved very soon.

It should be noted that Russia has not received the help promised by Western countries for the construction of the facilities. And the tanker for the storage and transportation of radioactive waste offered by Japan turned out to be wholly unsuitable for use.

Maritime Kray, Japan Combat Radioactive Waste

LD1503100394 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0717 GMT 15 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Leonid Vinogradov]

[Text] Vladivostok March 15 TASS—Russia's Maritime Territory and Japan are pooling efforts to combat their common trouble—the pollution of the Sea of Japan with the radioactive waste. The territorial administration head, Yevgeniy Nazdratenko, said specialists of the neighbouring country will install two waste-processing facilities to treat water used in nuclear submarine reactor.

Equipment of this kind has long been used in Japan and has proved a reliable tool in reducing radioactivity in waste to required level.

The first technological line will be installed in the Zvezda factory which repairs nuclear submarines in the city Bolshoy Kamen. Another installation will be attached to the Pacific Fleet. Russia's Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev, who visited Vladivostok on Monday, promised assistance in handling the project.

Kozyrev: No U.S. Objection to Middle East Talks

BR1403131594 Rome LA REPUBBLICA in Italian 13 Mar 94 p 17

[Report by Eleonora Bertolotto on remarks of Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev to journalists in Genoa on 12 March: "Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev: Russians Re-enter Mideast Arena; PLO Ready To Negotiate?"]

[Text] From Tunis to Genoa, from Jerusalem to New York: The Mideast peace negotiations are giving signs of emerging from hibernation and, this time too, as in Bosnia, Russia seems to be acting as the catalyst. On Friday [11 March], at the end of a shuttle trip between

PLO headquarters and Israel, Moscow's Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev "announced" the imminent resumption of the negotiations broken off after the Hebron massacre. In fact, Yasir 'Arafat was rather reserved, and all attention is now shifting to UN headquarters, where the Security Council is due to vote Monday on a resolution on the massacre, the text of which is now almost completely ready.

In his joint press conference with the PLO leader Friday evening, Kozyrev treated this as a fait accompli, talking in terms of Yasir 'Arafat's "great courage." The latter confined himself to reaffirming the "political" commitment to resume negotiations, which has in any case never been denied. Yesterday Palestinian sources specified that it is necessary to await the Security Council vote before negotiations can resume and that Russia and the United States, as "co-sponsors" of the peace conference must provide "practical" guarantees of the Palestinians' security. This is precisely what Israel does not want. In any case Washington clearly told 'Arafat a few days ago that it would prevent the approval of the UN resolution unless the PLO pledges to resume the dialogue with Israel. Yesterday the U.S. Government received Kozyrev's "announcement" with great circumspection.

Be that as it may, Moscow's foreign minister seemed determined to exploit the Middle Eastern arena, too, in order to bring Russian foreign policy to international attention again, and 'Arafat for the present seems willing to provide him with the opportunity to do so. This obviously pleased Kozyrev, who was in Genoa yesterday on an unscheduled stopover necessitated by fog over Rome airport: "It is the critical nature of the present situation that demands that all forces mobilize for peace," he told journalists, recalling that he had spoken two days ago with the U.S. State Department's second-in-command, Strobe Talbott: "We are agreed in our impression: Either we succeed in salvaging the peace process in the Middle East right away, or we are bound to lapse back into conflict. Our efforts are shared by the United States. When the house is in flames, everyone must help to quench the blaze."

[LA REPUBBLICA] But some people have the impression that the United States really is not pleased with this latest Russian diplomatic initiative.

[Kozyrev] We spoke the evening before my departure, and I explained my intentions. I was assured that there are no objections to the plan. In any case, we are in constant contact. After the Hebron tragedy, the main problem is for everyone to do their utmost to safeguard peace. This task involves Russia and the United States, but also the Security Council, within which we have gone to very great pains to establish a text acceptable to both Israel and the PLO. [Kozyrev ends]

After a brief stroll through the city accompanied by Russian Consul Valeriy Karassev (he wanted to visit Columbus' house), he had a conversation with journalists at the airport in which he gave an account of his meetings in Tunis and Jerusalem: "Rabin and Peres in Israel and 'Arafat in Tunis agreed on restarting the peace process and negotiations. It was more difficult for 'Arafat, of course, who is demanding guarantees for the Palestinian population in the occupied territories. Partly for this reason, I believe that the resumption of the dialogue is a wise move on his part, and also a very courageous one."

[LA REPUBBLICA] Is this a success for Russia?

[Kozyrev] Let us call it a joint achievement by Russia and the United States. At my meeting Monday with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in Vladivostok, we will talk about how our two countries can make themselves useful at this stage. We are willing to provide all the technical assistance necessary to organize the negotiations.

[LA REPUBBLICA] But when can the negotiations resume?

[Kozyrev] It is up to the Palestinians and Israelis to decide where, when, and how to meet. We will accept whatever decision they may make. It does not matter whether they meet in Washington or in Cairo: The only thing that counts is that an opening be created. And that the two sides agree on the need to settle the issue of Gaza and Jericho right away. And to proceed from there to extend their agreement. [Kozyrev ends]

The only uncertainty hanging over the peace process, Kozyrev said, is precisely the Security Council resolution on the Hebron massacre; its section covering measures to protect the Palestinians living in the territories occupied by Israel, which the PLO regards as a precondition. "But it is not only the PLO now," the Russian foreign minister said. "Israel, too, has clearly stated that the opening is conditional on the adoption of the UN resolution."

However, the text of the resolution, presented yesterday evening by Russia, Spain, France, and Britain, is very vague about how security should be guaranteed. It calls for unspecified "measures" to ensure the protection of Palestinian civilians throughout the occupied territories, including "a temporary international or foreign presence." This is exactly what the Palestinians are demanding and the Israelis refusing. The wording of the UN resolution is vague, however, and cites the "Declaration of Principles" signed by 'Arafat and Rabin in Washington on 13 September, which refers only to Gaza and Jericho and which in any case requires agreement between the two sides. The United States has objections on this point and on the section of the introduction that explicitly cites Jerusalem as being among the territories occupied by Israel. According to the Israeli Government, however, the city is the country's sole and indivisible capital, and there must be no discussion of its future for the present.

Russia No Longer Seeking 'Immediate' Talks

LD1403181594 Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian 1605 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] Russia and the United States continue to be partners in spite of all the trials and tribulations that bilateral relations have been subjected to of late. This was stated in Vladivostok today by Foreign Minister Kozyrev after his talks with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher. The problem of a settlement in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the situation in the Near East were also discussed during the meeting.

Russia is no longer insisting on the immediate holding of a second international conference on the Near East, Andrey Kozyrev disclosed. He said that the most important thing now was to complete work on the implementation of the agreement on Gaza and Jericho.

Vladivostok Talks Seen as Mideast Peacemaking Rivalry

MK1503110094 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 15 Mar 94 p 4

[Anastasiya Romashkevich, Denis Demkin article: "Andrey Kozyrev Talks. Youth and Experience Argued in the Far East About the Middle East"]

[Excerpts] The Vladivostok airport was the venue for yesterday's meeting between Andrey Kozyrev and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher. Their discussions had been expected to center on the Balkans. But recent events introduced some changes: The Kozyrev-Christopher meeting in the Far East was preceded by their urgent trips to the Middle East, thus the interlocutors paid considerable attention precisely to the problem of getting the Arab- Israeli talks back on track. According to an official version, the Vladivostok meeting is supposed to "have plastered over the cracks" that have run across the building of Russo-American relations. Despite the upbeat tone of the joint statement, more cracks may develop soon. [passage omitted]

The meeting in Vladivostok has revealed some differences—this time around, those of the sides' approach to the Middle East settlement. The Russian Foreign Ministry head arrived for the meeting from the Middle East without calling at Smolenskaya Square [ministry's headquarters in Moscow]. The upshot of his talks with PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat in Tunisia on Friday was the Palestinians' agreement in principle to return to the negotiating table. The Arabs, for that matter, demanded for themselves guarantees of security via an international presence on the Israel-occupied territories. Having backed the PLO's demands, Russia also thought that the talks could only be resumed after the Arabs and Israel agree on the question of guarantees. The United States spoke for an immediate resumption of the talks. Remarkably, its actions in recent days were emphatically independent from Moscow. On Sunday, Christopher stated that U.S. efforts to get the Palestinian-Israeli talks resumed were successful. He made this statement after, having been overcome with curiosity to know what Kozyrev had been talking about, he phoned Israeli Premier Rabin and 'Arafat on Saturday night. Already yesterday, U.S. Middle East settlement coordinator Dennis Ross arrived in Tunisia for urgent consultations with the PLO. Literally hours after, it was announced that an Israeli delegation was also leaving for Tunisia to join in the consultations. That is to say, there is an obvious rivalry in Middle East peacemaking between Moscow and Washington. [passage omitted]

Incidentally, local observers did not pass over the fact that the heads of diplomatic agencies did not meet in the local Negotiations House but at the airport—and at the Americans' request. The formal reason was a banal shortage of time. According to rumors being whipped up in Vladivostok, however, Christopher had decided to respond to the hurt caused to ex-President Richard Nixon in Moscow.

Growing U.S.-Russia Tensions 'Not Insoluble'

PM1403124194 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 12 Mar 94 p 2

["Topic of the Week" by commentator Aleksandr Golts: "Chill Must Not Develop Into Confrontation"]

[Text] What is happening in U.S.-Russian relations now brings to mind a well-known anecdote: The pessimist says: "For some reason everything's gone wrong." Optimist: "That's nothing, it's going to get even worse." Conflicts and microcrises, beginning with the Ames affair and ending with former U.S. President Nixon's somewhat scandalous visit to Russia, have been following one another virtually uninterruptedly and in ever-increasing intensity. Furthermore, they are clearly assuming the character of a tendency toward a serious cooling off between Moscow and Washington.

For example, hardly had mutual understanding on the Yugoslav settlement been achieved than the United States was "gloating" over the negative reaction to Russia's idea of holding a conference on the Near East settlement. This week another alarming feature emerged—namely, the intensification of the American factor in CIS affairs. It is certainly not the actual fact of a U.S. desire to play a more active role in the post-Soviet area that is causing alarm but the fact that this is happening, to put it mildly, without even a hint of cooperation between Moscow and Washington.

I have in mind the recent visits to the United States by the leaders of Ukraine and Georgia. On the one hand, one can only welcome contacts in which economic cooperation and the ensuring of peace and stability are discussed. But at the same time you cannot fail to see that the sides are most actively playing the "Russia card." Without the participation of Russia itself.

What, for example, was the point of Leonid Kravchuk's statement that "cooperation with the West will provide an opportunity to avoid the dire process now developing in Russia" where, according to him, "there is a perceptible tendency toward the creation of difficulties of an extremist and expansionist character." To translate that from the language of diplomatic innuendo to normal everyday speech, it can only mean one thing: Ukraine is offering itself to the West as a partner in preventing "Russian expansionism." You can understand Kravchuk: He is offering the little that he has to offer. But it is alarming that the United States did not consider it necessary to explain its own position clearly.

All this was expressed even more candidly during Shevardnadze's visit. As an experienced politician with an excellent grasp of the way things really are, he immediately presented the United States with a choice: either a UN peacemaking operation, or the performance of peacemaking functions by Russian troops. The Americans were quick to confirm that they will give every support to option one in the Security Council. Admittedly, Clinton immediately ruled out the very possibility of the direct involvement of U.S. troops. This, by all accounts, is not the only condition. A high-ranking administration representative cited by the WASHINGTON POST stressed in particular that the administration wants to restrict Russia's participation a much as possible in the peacemaking operation for fear of the rebirth of Moscow's imperial ambitions.

If all this is really so, such an approach not only goes beyond the bounds of normal mutual relations between states which just yesterday were virtually calling themselves allies, but also goes beyond the bounds of common sense. It turns out that for Washington it is more important to prevent the revival of the "empire" that it dreads so much. Even if that is to the detriment of a settlement of the conflicts on the territory of the former USSR. Incidentally, the U.S. secretary of state's recent statement confirms that this is indeed close to the facts. Christopher stressed that the United States does not recognize Russia's right to undertake any actions in the newly independent states without coordination with the United Nations and other international organizations. One can hardly object to the need to coordinate particular actions. Russia tried to do that by seeking a UN mandate to conduct peacemaking operations. But such coordination must happen exclusively through the will of the states directly involved in the resolution of conflict situations. On a voluntary basis, and certainly not to the order of the United States. Does Washington allow its own freedom of action to be restricted anywhere at all by consultations with international organizations? This is Orwellian: Everyone is free but some are freer than others.

It is not hard to find grounds for a cooling off between America and Russia (you can find quite a few grounds in the relations between two major states if you are prepared to look); the hardest thing to find is the real reason for it. In my view, the real reason is that Russia is beginning, albeit agonizingly and not without an inner struggle and inevitable vacillations, to reconsider its place and role in the world. That is prompted by the development of the internal political situation and an understanding of the West's real potential for supporting the reforms and settling conflict situations in the former USSR. It has become clear (regrettably quite late in the day) that this potential is not very great at all.

It has also become absolutely clear that people have to resolve their problems—economic, military-political, and geostrategic—themselves. But a country must feel that it is capable of doing that. Yes, Russia's new, active role in unblocking conflict situations in the countries of the former USSR and beyond, be it participation in the Yugoslav settlement or the Near East settlement, is important primarily because Moscow is offering sensible ways to end the sufferings of many thousands of people. But it must be said bluntly that this is also fundamentally important for Russia's self-consciousness now—once again it feels that it is a state capable of raising and, importantly, resolving global tasks. And, when it comes to strengthening this consciousness, hopes are pinned on the successful solution of our internal difficulties.

But across the ocean it seems that they were not prepared for such a development of events. Over there they are too accustomed to regard themselves as the sole world center of power. And Russia's new view of itself and its role has provoked an irritated and not unduly rational reaction, in my view. The essence of the U.S. position and of the new U.S. prejudices was expressed quite recently by international affairs expert Dimitri Simes. The United States, he stated, is a great global power; Russia is a regional power. And a conflict will always occur whenever Moscow lays claim to globalism. If the United States is proposing to take just such an approach, this will obviously lead to deadlock.

Meanwhile the contradictions that exist are not insoluble. To eliminate them people only need to renounce the stereotyped images of Russia as a second-class country that have developed so quickly. It is important for both Moscow and Washington now not to be distracted by hysteria or be led along by those for whom the Cold War was the most precious thing on earth. Such people exist in both countries. There can be no doubt that they are trying to take advantage of the present cooling off. The danger today is that the search for a new model of mutual relations can easily give way to an escalation of charge and countercharge. However, neither Russia nor the United States can permit themselves the luxury of a new confrontation.

I believe that concern for the future of Russo-U.S. relations is by no means the least reason for Monday's meeting between Andrey Kozyrev and Warren Christopher in Vladivostok. Both states have a good opportunity to prevent an undesirable development of events. We shall see if they are successful.

Amendment to Uranium Agreement With U.S. Coordinated

LD1503101094 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0519 GMT 15 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Pavel Vanichkin]

[Text] Washington March 15 TASS—U.S. Secretary of Commerce Ronald Brown has described an amendment to the bilateral agreement on the suspension of anti-dumping inquiry into the deliveries of uranium products from Russia to the U.S. as a considerable step in trade cooperation between the two countries.

"The document envisages a joint sale of American and Russian uranium products in the U.S., and at market prices, too," Russian Deputy Minister of Nuclear Power Nikolay Yegorov, who signed the amendment for the Russian Government, told ITAR-TASS.

"According to preliminary estimates, Russia's revenue from the sale of uranium on the U.S. market may run at 150 million U.S. dollars annually. Of great importance is also the consent of U.S. uranium producers, who earlier accused our country of a desire to sell uranium products at dumping prices, to cooperate with Russia," Yegorov said.

A press release circulated here by the Russian Embassy in the U.S. points out that the amendment, agreed upon by the governments of the two countries, reflects the mutually beneficial and innovatory approach to the solution of trade problems and is a new specific example of partners' relations being developed by Russia and the U.S.

No Agreement Reached With Latvia on Skrunda Radar Station

LD1403215294 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2024 GMT 14 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Sergey Bazhenov]

[Text] Moscow March 14 TASS—Russia and Latvia have failed to come to an agreement on Russia's payment for using a radar station in Skrunda (Latvia).

A regular round of Russo-Latvian talks began here on Monday.

The two delegations reached an agreement on social welfare guarantees for the retired Russian military. According to the agreement, those of them who permanently resided in Latvia as of January 28, 1992, are "guaranteed the right to unhindered residence in Lithuania and use of their movable property and real estate".

The agenda for the current round of talks includes discussions of an agreement on Russian troop withdrawal from Latvia and an agreement on legal status, conditions, terms and order of work of the Russian radar station in Skrunda.

Foreign Ministry Official Upbeat on Latvian Talks

LD1403184294 Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian 1605 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] The latest round of Russian-Latvian talks on military issues began in Moscow today. Both sides are placing great hopes on this round. Sergey Prikhodko, a Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman, was interviewed by our correspondent:

[Begin Prikhodko recording] We are very hopeful. It appears to us that contacts between experts from the two delegations on the eve of the talks have helped to achieve further progress toward agreement on outstanding questions. We hope that agreement on the technical questions that experts have not yet resolved will be achieved during this round, thereby creating real prospects for the initialling of the entire range of agreements on military questions. [end recording]

Disagreements still remain on the use of the Russian radar station at Skrunda and the status of Russian military pensioners.

Latvian Troop Withdrawal Treaty Initialled

LD1503143294 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1345 GMT 15 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondents Vladimir Beskomnyy and Denis Perkin]

[Text] Moscow, 15 Mar—Russia and Latvia initialled today the treaty on the withdrawal of Russian troops from this Baltic republic.

Sergey Zotov, the head of the Russian delegation at talks with Latvia, described the event to ITAR-TASS as "the victory of common sense", and added that the document "paves the way to a meeting between the Russian and Latvian presidents and to the signing of the prepared documents in the course of the summit meeting". In the opinion of the Russian diplomat, this meeting may take place as early as the first half of April this year.

Full Gas Deliveries to Belarus Resumed

LD1503105994 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0946 GMT 15 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Igor Ivantsov]

[Text] Moscow March 15 TASS—Russia has resumed full deliveries of natural gas to Belarus after cuts were made to make Belarus pay its arrears for the earlier supplies.

The deliveries are expected to reach the earlier agreed 54 million cubic meters a day by the end of Tuesday, as agreed by Beltransgas and Gasprom during their negotiations in Moscow at the weekend.

Polish Prime Minister Pawlak Holds Talks in Moscow

Pawlak Seeks End to 'Stagnation'

LD1403204294 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1945 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] Prime Minister Waldemar Pawlak arrived in Moscow on Monday evening for a working visit.

He told Russian Deputy Premier Yuriy Yarov, who met him at the airport, that he hoped his one-day visit would serve to step up Polish-Russian cooperation.

A senior Polish Foreign Ministry source who asked not to be identified told Interfax Pawlak's trip was unexpected to many in Poland. Even President Lech Walesa told the Polish news agency PAP on Monday that he had known nothing about Pawlak's plans to go to Russia, the source said.

He said the main purpose of the visit was to end the present-day stagnation in Polish-Russian trade and economic relations, primarily caused by the red tape of officials in both countries. The premier hopes to solve some key problems that have not been tackled for two or three years, namely, he wishes to reach agreement with Russia on the mutual cancellation of debts and terms for trade and economic cooperation. Warsaw will be satisfied with the visit if, during it, deadlines are set for the solution of five or six major economic problems and specific officials are put in charge of the work, the source said.

He said Poland did not attach prime importance to a package of accords ready to be signed in Moscow, which includes agreements on antimonopoly measures and on regulations on the employment of Russian citizens in Poland and Polish citizens in Russia.

On Tuesday, Pawlak will meet Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and will be having talks at the Finance and Agriculture Ministries and the Committee on Industrial Policy. He will return to Poland the same day.

Urges Raw Materials, Transport Accords

LD1503094594 Warsaw PAP in English 0811 GMT 15 Mar 94

[Text] Moscow, March 15—Prime Minister Waldemar Pawlak said starting his visit to Moscow on Monday that it was high time that Poland and Russia gave up mutual declarations and stopped talking about assistance but proceeded to concrete steps beneficial to both countries. Pawlak said he would like to translate the language of treaties and accords into practical actions. He said he meant primarily long-term agreements on strategic raw materials and steps to build a gas pipeline from Russia to Western Europe, a railway line and a highway linking Berlin, Warsaw and Moscow.

Chernomyrdin, Pawlak Discuss Cooperation

LD1503105594 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0925 GMT 15 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Ivan Ivanov]

[Text] Moscow March 15 TASS—Russian and Polish prime ministers met in the Russian Government house today to consider closer interaction in the economic field. They are working towards the signing of an intergovernmental agreement on the principles of Russian citizens' labour activity on Polish territory and Polish citizens on Russian territory, as well as an intergovernmental agreement on cooperation in the antimonopoly activity.

The two premiers first met for a one-to-one talk and are due to continue negotiations in a broader format within the frame of the Polish Prime Minister Waldemar Pawlak's official visit to the Russian capital.

Churkin Returns to Zagreb for Further Talks

LD1403212894 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 2040 GMT 14 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Naryshkin]

[Text] Zagreb, 14 Mar—Vitaliy Churkin, the Russian president's special envoy, who returned from Belgrade to Zagreb this evening, has met Croatian leader Franjo Tudjman for the second time in the last 48 hours. Churkin also held talks with Mate Granic, Croatian deputy prime minister and foreign minister.

The high-ranking Russian diplomat told an ITAR-TASS correspondent that during the talks they discussed ways to organize further negotiations on Bosnia and possible options for a state system in the Bosnian federation, as well as Croat-Serb relations.

Tomorrow the Russian deputy foreign minister will hold a number of working meetings in the Croatian capital.

NATO Seen as Threat to Russian Interests in Bosnia

PM1503105194 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 15 Mar 94 p 3

[Yevgeniy Popov article: "Phantoms Swooping in the Fog"]

[Text] The name of the Bosnian town of Maglaj has been making the headlines in the world press in recent days. In Serbian the word "magla" means gloom or fog.

Magla—fog—features in many extremely colorful popular phrases relating most directly, unfortunately, to the present stage of the protracted Bosnian conflict. People who have lost their composure are described by the Serbs as having "fog descending over their eyes." Fleeing cowards are described as having fled into the fog, and people who behave unthinkingly and thoughtlessly and take a leap into the unknown, as "plunging into the fog."

As BBC radio reported, "twice in the last eight days UN forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina have been ready to launch air strikes against Serb positions."

World opinion is being purposefully and methodically prepared for another escalation of the Bosnian military conflict. This is being done, to use the Serb expression, under cover of a "diplomatic fog"—talk about peacemaking and about how allegedly it has finally proved possible to achieve a breakthrough at the peace talk among the conflicting parties.

Yet there are only separate Muslim-Croat talks, which it would be more correct to describe as a conspiracy aimed against the Serbs. After Washington, where U.S. Secretary of State Christopher managed to bring the Muslims and Croats together by promising U.S. dollars to cement their still extremely problematic alliance, more detailed consultations shifted to Vienna. According to recent reports, an agreement has been reached on dividing Bosnian lands into Swiss-type cantons.

The Serbs have nothing against a Muslim-Croat federation, which could eventually become a confederation with Croatia, provided only that it is not the intention to form the new cantons at the expense of Serbian lands. But Muslim leader Alia Izetbegovic is already making absolutely overt demands of the Serbs for territorial concessions in favor of the nascent federation!

At the same time the cynical U.S. and NATO blackmail of the Serbs is growing all the time. It is in this context that we should view both the recent act of piracy by the Phantom aircraft which downed four Chaykas in the skies over Banja-Luka and the recent combat air patrols by NATO bandits [stervyatnik] over Maglaj.

As world news agencies have reported, British Lieutenant General Rose, commander of UN forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina, asked Yasushi Akashi, the UN secretary general's representative in the former Yugoslavia, for authorization to launch air strikes against Serb positions and was given it. After which Phantoms made combat flights into the Maglaj area, although they were unable to carry out the mission because of bad weather.

Maybe the most monstrous thing in this episode is Russian diplomacy's latest act of treachery toward the Serbs. Kozyrev's department is behaving as if nothing extraordinary has happened, and in recent days presidential envoy Vitaliy Churkin has even made statements which essentially constitute pressure on the Bosnian Serbs.

The fog surrounding "Yeltsin's Balkan initiative" is gradually dispersing, and on the eve of Kozyrev's meeting with Christopher in Vladivostok the British newspaper THE TIMES made a prediction which, unfortunately, looks extremely plausible: "It looks like the Americans have concluded a new Yalta carve-up with Moscow." In which case, the newspaper concludes, "one can only sympathize with the Serbs." It would be more correct, however, to say that sympathy should be extended not only to the betrayed Serb people but also to us Russians, since the Phantoms currently swooping over Maglaj are in fact also ready to open fire on Russia's interests!

British Agent High-Ranking Member of Arms Industry

LD1403160094 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1406 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] A well-informed source in Russia's Federal Counterintelligence Service confirmed that the British agent detained in Moscow last January was Russian citizen Vadim Sintsov, who held a high post in the arms industry concern SMM.

According to the Federal Counterintelligence Service, he passed over information about Russia's defense potential and test defense projects to British intelligence agencies.

The source did not confirm, however, that Sintsov had worked with the British intelligence agencies since 1986. He said that he had been recruited much later, but refused to give the exact time or assess the damage inflicted on Russia.

Detained German Deemd More Valuable

MK1503112094 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 15 Mar 94 p 1

[Andrey Streletskiy report under the "Special Services" rubric: "Surprise Move by Russian Counterintelligence Service Forces German Intelligence Service Chief To Leave Moscow Ahead of Schedule"]

[Text] As has already been reported, on Thursday, 10 March, officers of the Russian Federal Counterintelligence Service [FCS] detained a Russian citizen suspected of cooperating with the FRG Federal Intelligence Service (BND). Aleksandr Mikhaylov, chief of the FCS Public Relations Center, would not give any details, pointing out that doing so before an indictment is handed down would be premature. Ironically, soon before it caught the BND agent, the Russian counterintelligence service had exposed a spy who worked for the British MI6 service; at the time it immediately revealed some details about him—for instance, that he was an employee of a Russian military-industrial company. This fact has suggested that the German spy caught in the FCS net is more important than the British one.

This theory was also confirmed by report, which was made public a bit later, about a telephone conversation between Horst Schmidtbauer, state minister at the FRG federal chancellor's office, and Anatoliy Safonov, FCS deputy director, to discuss matters concerning the arrest of the German intelligence service's agent. According to INTERFAX, the FCS representative said that the arrest of the German agent does not have any political bottom-line.

But why has the German side raised the question about the possible political bottom-line of a basically run-of-the-mill spy drama? Information received by NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA from competent sources suggests that it was forced to do so.

It turned out that the press reported about the BND agent's arrest at a time when BND President Konrad Porzner was in Moscow. Mr. Porzner was invited to the Russian capital by FCS chiefs to discuss matters regarding the cooperation between the two countries' special services in areas where their interests coincide: the struggle against organized crime, international terrorism, activity in crisis areas.

As soon as the news about the exposed German spy was made public, Mr. Porzner was forced to suspend the talks and immediately leave for home—to clarify the situation. To all appearances, it is this embarrassing situation that has forced the Germans to make "additional references."

The incident was not discussed by the chiefs of the FCS and the BND. Officials at the Russian special service hope, however, that the emergency will not thwart the already established and fairly fruitful cooperation of the two special services, a cooperation that nonetheless does not rule out classical intelligence activity against each other.

The arrest of a BND agent against the backdrop of the German special service chief's visit to Moscow may have occurred by chance. On the other hand, the FCS presumably had information about the spy long enough to expose him some time earlier. In this event, the goings-on have reminded us once again that intelligence and counterintelligence services have always maintained a special relationship that could scarcely be called a friendly one.

Joining Partnership for Peace Seen as Hasty

MK1503103094 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 15 Mar 94 p 1

[Vladimir Katin report from Brussels: "Russia's Partnership With NATO Is a Misalliance. Kremlin Has Lost Its Nerve Too Soon"]

[Text] As of today, virtually everyone for whom NATO's "Partnership for Peace" program is meant has joined it. Except, so far, for Russia. I was told at the NATO head office that in principle that matter has already been resolved and that work is currently under way to draw up a corresponding document. If this is really so, Russia appears to be the first to have lost its nerve.

It so happened that all Russia's former Warsaw Pact allies and some former Soviet Union republics marched to NATO barracks having joined the "Partnership for Peace" program. U.S. President Bill Clinton, NATO General Secretary Woerner, and others have been telling President Yeltsin courteously: The door is open for you, too, all you need is to enter. An alternative is isolation. The top Russian authorities have long hesitated. A situation has come about where either Russia accepts the "Partnership for Peace" program for fear of isolation in Europe, or NATO countries will change their tone and suggest that Russia itself define its place in the collective defense system. The first option prevailed.

Everything could have turned out differently, however, were it not for someone's nerves. The thing is that in the NATO head office and in the capitals of the alliance's key members they had been bracing themselves for a turn or, maybe, an overture toward Moscow. For instance, Robert Hunter, U.S. ambassador to NATO, speaking at a special colloquium organized by the European Strategic Studies Center in Brussels on 25 February 1993 [as published], said bluntly: Relations between Russia and NATO should be a matter of special talks, which, to all appearances, may end up giving Russia a special status.

Guillaume Parmantier, an authority strategic affairs, professor at the Political Studies Institute, and deputy director of the NATO information department, the other day made a detailed analysis of the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina, pointing out Russia's extraordinary role in its settlement. "We should not forget," Parmantier writes, "that Russia is a great power. Any attempt to keep it away from the efforts to ensure European security would be a great mistake... Giving this power any security guarantees would make no sense, and inviting it to join NATO would be absurd."

These and other facts and evidence suggest that sentiments were gaining ground in NATO to offer Moscow something other than the "Partnership for Peace." They reasoned validly in NATO that it would not behoove Russia to join NATO on the same, albeit gentleman's, principles as Estonia and Albania.

It is quite possible, however, that the principles will indeed differ from those on which the East Europeans and the Baltic states have joined it. But what is important is the end result—what will happen after the probationary period expires for countries that have signed the "Partnership for Peace" program? Everything will proceed in a clear-cut military fashion: these countries will perfectly naturally become full-blown members of the North Atlantic Alliance. This is actually why the transition program was invented. It is then that Russia will face a new dilemma. If it stays in the capacity of a "Partnership for Peace" member, this means that Russia will find itself in isolation once again and will be subjected to discrimination by comparison with other East European countries that will have become full NATO members. If it follows their suit and agrees to full membership, then it will have to place its armed forces, military plans, and budget under the control and command of ...the United States. For under a long-standing tradition, the NATO commander in chief has always been and remains an American general.

DPRK Envoy Says Nuclear Problem 'Imaginary'

PM1503100594 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 12 Mar 94 p 1

[Interview with DPRK Ambassador to Russia Son Song-Pil by Sergey Turchenko: "DPRK Getting In Someone's Way"]

[Text] As we have already reported, the United States has been bringing heavy pressure to bear on the DPRK of late and there have even been threats to use military force. This time the "world gendarme" has opted for "concern" over the alleged nuclear threat from North Korea as the reason for attacking an independent socialist state. The DPRK has taken a firm and resolute stance.

Recently there was a meeting between DPRK and U.S. delegations at which this question was discussed. What was its outcome? We put this question to North Korean Ambassador to Russia Comrade Son Song-pil.

[Son] We were able to elaborate an accord on four points: the cessation of the "Team Spirit-94" military exercises near the Korean border; the start of International Atomic Energy Authority inspections at our facilities; the resumption of the meeting of representatives from North and South on questions of exchanging special envoys; and the holding of a third round of Korean-American talks in Geneva, starting on 21 March 1994.

By and large we are satisfied with these decisions. But there was a strongly negative reaction to them on the part of Japan and South Korea. They are attempting to wreck the negotiating process.

[Turchenko] What are the reasons for this approach?

[Son] Japan already has stocks of 26 tonnes of plutonium. By 2010 they are forecast to reach 100 tonnes. This is enough to make 10,000 nuclear bombs. In February Japan launched a large long-range missile, the "H-2," which could be used to deliver a nuclear weapon. A similar situation exists in South Korea. It started developing nuclear weapons back in the seventies, and it has now entered a very significant stage. Both these countries need to be constantly grumbling about the imaginary nuclear problem in the DPRK in order to be able to continue their own developments.

[Turchenko] In connection with the Korean-American talks there was a report on Russian television to the effect that the DPRK had allegedly somewhat relaxed its resolve to steadfastly follow the path of building socialism, and a statement by the supreme leadership on a switch to Chinese-style reforms was supposedly expected in the very near future. What comment can you make on this?

[Son] It is sheer disinformation. We have established and will develop our own style of socialist system.

Political Issues

Yeltsin: 'In Control' During Sochi Visit

LD1403185294

[Editorial Report] Russian Television Network in Russian at 1725 GMT on 14 March carries its 10-minute "Details" program, presented by Sergey Dorenko. The program is devoted to former President Nixon's visit to Moscow.

Dorenko says it was intimated to Nixon that he could not see Yeltsin because Yeltsin was busy. He adds that Yeltsin himself spoke of this prior to his departure for a two-week vacation in Sochi. Yeltsin is then shown being interviewed at the airport. He says: "My leave simply means that my work routine is altered somewhat. Of course you are able to have walks, to go for strolls, to have a rest, but, at the same time, you are also able to work.

"All the same, I am in control of the situation; I mean the position and the state of affairs in the whole of Russia. I monitor it constantly, as it were, not just every day, but several times a day. Relevant leaders report to me and that is why if anything comes up, I will fly back forthwith. However, it is not currently thought that any upsets might materialize and that is why I am flying in a rather calm mood.

"As for my work—yes, all the time I work on something serious for the future. Currently the work is this: the mechanism of the implementation of the presidential address to the Federal Assembly; that is to say, the address is one thing, but the matter of its implementation point by point, especially where the statehood dimension is concerned, and so on, and so on, and so forth, well, there must be a schedule for this, as you would have for a monthly day-by-day plan of action, as it were."

Views Work in Sochi

PM1403174794 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 15 Mar 94 p 2

[Vasiliy Kononenko report: "B. Yeltsin Has Gone to Sochi Not for Treatment But To Rest and Work"]

[Text] The end of March promises to bring yet another burst of activity to Russia's political life. It is planned that a memorandum on accord and peace will have been prepared by that time. No easy task. This fact is probably linked to some extent with President B. Yeltsin's departure for Sochi. If the chronology of all the memorable events of the last few years is traced, a pattern inevitably emerges: Before making important, not to mention unexpected, decisions the president has disappeared for some time from journalists' field of vision and has withdrawn in order to get away from current affairs and work out his plans.

This supposition was indirectly confirmed by the president himself during a conversation with journalists at Vnukovo-2 Airport. "For me, leave is a change of work regime," he said. When asked about the state of his health, he replied: "Fine, although I have suffered two bouts of influenza. I am going not for treatment, but to rest and work."

Later, replying to an IZVESTIYA correspondent's question as to whether the president foresees difficulties over the drafting of the memorandum on accord and peace, he stated: "An easy solution to this problem is not to be expected—the spectrum of opinions among political forces is too broad. Nonetheless there is a chance for defining common approaches, which would become the basis for accord. It is possible that leaders of certain power structures, including the prime minister, will come to Sochi to work on this document," he stressed. The president also announced that during his leave he intends to spend time working out a mechanism for implementing the president's message to parliament. "This must be done in such a way that this mechanism's work is scheduled on a month-by-month basis."

Chernomyrdin arrived at Vnukovo-2 to see him off with a magnificent bouquet of flowers. It turned out that they were intended not for the president but his wife, whose birthday it is today.

Arrives in Sochi

LD1503091894 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0735 GMT 15 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS]

[Text] Sochi March 15 TASS—Russian President Boris Yeltsin, who arrived in Sochi on Monday on a brief vacation, on the same day met with the regional head of the Krasnodar region, Nikolay Yegorov. The two discussed a wide range of economic, political and management issues.

Before departure from Moscow Yeltsin told journalists that he is going to Sochi "in order to work there, rather than for medical treatment." In particular, during his vacation the president intends to work out a mechanism of the realisation of the presidential message to the Federal Assembly and consider the problem of preparations for a draft agreement on civil peace and accord.

Grachev Cancels Trip Due to Yeltsin Absence

LD1403183394 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1800 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] A working trip by Pavel Grachev, Russian minister of defense, to the troops of the Leningrad military district which was planned for today has been postponed, Yelena Agapova, the minister's spokeswoman, has told ITAR-TASS. She said that the decision to postpone Pavel Grachev's trip was made with a view to ensuring reliable control of the strategic nuclear forces while President Boris Yeltsin, supreme commander, and Mikhail Kolesnik, chief of the general staff, are not in Moscow.

Stepashin Hospitalized After Meeting Yeltsin

MK1503101094 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 15 Mar 94 p 1

[POSTFACTUM report: "Federal Counterintelligence Service Director Sergey Stepashin Hospitalized"]

[Text] Lieutenant General Sergey Stepashin, Federal Counterintelligence Service director, was taken to the hospital in an ambulance from his own office after, according to some information, becoming sick due to a worsening of his stomach ulcer. The confidential source, who would rather remain anonymous, intimated that the reason was not the illness but the meeting with President Yeltsin, soon after which Sergey Stepashin was sent to the departmental hospital.

Yeltsin Aide Filatov on Amnesty Issue

PM1403162994 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 12 Mar 94 p 4

["IZVESTIYA Exclusive" Interview with Sergey Filatov, leader of the President's Administration, by ITAR-TASS Observer Tamara Zamyatina, date and place not given: "Sergey Filatov: The Opposition Imposed Its Rules of the Game on the President"]

[Text] After the Russian Prosecutor General's Office, acting in accordance with the State Duma decree, released the organizers of the bloodshed in Moscow, many fellow citizens asked the following question: Since the president called this decision unconstitutional, why did he not use his powers as guarantor of the Constitution and suspend the act of political amnesty?

Sergey Filatov, leader of the President's Administration, now gives his opinion on the reasons for the conduct of Boris Yeltsin, his aides Yuriy Baturin and Georgiy Satarov, the State Duma deputies, and the leaders of the Prosecutor General's Office.

A few days before the decision on the political amnesty was adopted, I attended the Duma Council session which discussed the draft of this document. No one supported the draft apart from Zhirinovskiy. Votes were cast against it by Shakhray, who predetermined the result of the 23 February vote, and by Lakhova and the representatives of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation faction. They asked the same questions that we are asking today: What kind of political amnesty is this, is it not a cover for criminals to hide behind, and how is the decree to be implemented without causing distortions to the law? On the basis of these questions which remained unresolved in the draft decree, the deputies voted against it. However, a few days later they voted in favor of it. Yet the questions remained unanswered and the deputies were supposed to have adopted a document which would have addressed those questions. Who can explain this inconsistency?

However, there is surely some consistency here. After all, by no means the least role in the adoption of the amnesty decision was played by those same people who opposed the president in the former Supreme Soviet. The only difference is that Viktor Ilyukhin, leader of the Security Committee and a member of the communist faction, came to the aid of Vladimir Isakov, leader of the Legislation Committee.

There is a certain logic to the opposition's conduct. Its plan is this: Either the president does not intervene in its actions, in which case the opposition will achieve its goal, or the president does intervene, in which case he loses by setting himself against the legislative power.

You can try that trick once, you can try it twice. But you cannot be sure that every time you do it all the senior officials will withdraw and leave the president one on one with that misunderstanding of the laws, which is what the opposition is doing. You cannot always count on the fact that the president will have the final say. There is a certain threshold, there are rules which every responsible official must abide by.

But when you are expecting a normal constitutional process and they impose the complete opposite on you, this of course produces a certain shock. But it was agreed to refrain from such rules after the 12 December elections and work instead on the basis of constructive cooperation between the branches of power. But what has happened is that Baturin and Satarov, the president's aides, acted according to civilized rules and held talks with the State Duma, the Prosecutor General's Office, and the Supreme Court but the latter merely played games with them. After all, the word "immediately" in the State Duma decision on the amnesty has nothing to do with jurisprudence. But instead of waiting for clarifications from the lower house of parliament on the mechanism for the enactment of its decree, it was set in motion straight away.

I told Kazannik about this when I phoned him on the evening of Friday, 25 February. The first thing that he said to me was this: "At 0900 hours on 26 February I shall release them all from Lefortovo." I was worried that the decision was being implemented right away without clarification on the mechanism of its implementation. I put that question to Kazannik, and he replied: "If I do not release them, Kravtsev (deputy prosecutor general—T.Z. note) will."

My second question was this: Why not hand the State Duma's decision over to the Constitutional Court, after all, it will continue its work on the basis of the new law any day now. Kazannik replied that this law does not exist at the moment. My third suggestion was to pass the

Duma's decree to the Supreme Court, a structure that is in operation. To all these questions I received a negative reply.

The final words which Kazannik said to me were these: "If I do not release them I will be charged under the article on exceeding my powers."

No matter what one says about the need to obey the letter of the law, I am sure that the haste and inconsistency with which the Prosecutor General's Office acted are absolutely obvious.

The judicial investigation which is now being conducted at the Russian Prosecutor General's Office on the instructions of its new leader, Aleksey Ilyushenko, will answer many of the questions about the circumstances of and reasons for the hasty implementation of the State Duma's decree on the political amnesty.

I am also bound to note a certain aloofness on the part of the deputies, prosecutors, and judges to the reason why the amnesty was carried out. We have already been through this once before when Khasbulatov imposed his ideas and believed that he was acting in the interests of all society. If the reason for the amnesty was to achieve social accord, there is only one side which cannot take part in that process. After all, those people who left Lefortovo jail take no account of the fact that this was done for their sake.

As a result, the last word has once again been left to the President, who to achieve real accord undertook the initiative to unite all the political forces in society for the elaboration of a charter on civil peace in the country.

Poll Shows Majority Consider Amnesty Wrong

PM1503085594 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 12 Mar 94 p 4

[Unattributed report: "'Opinion' of the Amnesty"]

[Text] The "Opinion" service (leader Gr. Pashkov) carried out a telephone poll 4-6 March. There were 1,100 respondents. The sample is representative in terms of sex, age, level of education, and main types of work:

Do you think that the State Duma acted rightly or wrongly in declaring an amnesty for those who participated in the events of August 1991 and October 1993?

Wrongly—56.9
Don't know—21.8

Do you think that following the amnesty the political situation in our country will improve, deteriorate, or stay the same?

Improve— 6.1
Deteriorate—43.6
Stay the same—28.2
Don't know—22.1

What punishment do you think 1) the members of the State Committee for the State of Emergency, 2) Rutskoy, and 3) Khasbulatov, deserve?

	1)	2)	3)
None	21.5	17.5	14.8
Pardon	5.9	6.5	6.4
Suspended custodial sentence	9.8	8.0	8.7
Up to five years' imprisonment	9.9	9.7	11.0
Up to 10 years	6.8	8.1	9.7
Over 10 years	5.1	6.5	7.1
Life imprisonment	2.5	4.6	4.1
Death sentence	2.5	3.4	3.3
Don't know	36.0	35.7	34.9

Presidential Aide Samoylov on Local Elections

PM1403102194 Moscow TRUD in Russian 11 Mar 94 pp 1, 2

[Interview with Sergey Samoylov, deputy chief of the Administration for Work With Territories of the Russian President's Administration, by Nikolay Dorofeyev; date and place not given: "Russia Continues To Choose"—first paragraph is introduction]

[Text] In accordance with the Russian Federation president's edict "On Stage-By-Stage Constitutional Reform" elections were held 12 December to the country's new supreme legislative organ—the Federal Assembly. Thereby began the process of forming a representative branch of power in Russia, and this process is now moving to the regions. TRUD's correspondent discusses what is happening now as regards elections in the federation components with Sergey Samoylov, deputy chief of the Administration for Work With Territories of the Russian Federation President's Administration.

[Dorofeyev] Let us begin our conversation, Sergey Nikolayevich, at the end. Where, in your view, do the greatest difficulties now lie as regards the elections to the new representative organs of the Russian Federation components?

[Samoylov] Elections will be held in the majority of regions 20 and 27 March 1994. As far as the significance of the elections is concerned, the problem is the public's poor understanding of the new quality of the representative organs. Very little purposeful explanatory work is being carried out in this area, and far from everyone understands that they will not be a reproduction of the system of soviets, but fundamentally different representative organs. There are also difficulties of a purely political character. After all, these organs are to be formed in the absence of currently existing representative power in the localities, with virtually all organizational questions being "farmed out" to executive structures. Now the executive organs, tired of fighting after several years of confrontation with the soviets, want to obtain ineffectual representative organs. The Russian president, however, is committed to seeing that the principle of the separation of powers and the principle of people's power which are enshrined in the mechanism of these elections finally begin to operate.

A cause of unease is the high activity of opposition political forces seeking at any cost to seize a dominant position in the organs of power by exploiting the election campaign for the purposes of discrediting the president's reform policy. In the majority of regions the sociopolitical situation is pretty tense, which will undoubtedly have an impact on voter turnout, putting in doubt the possibility of holding elections in a number of regions on the dates established by edicts, or affect the quality of these elections. This applies to regions of the Far North and to Magadan Oblast. There is no experience of legislative activity in the regions.

[Dorofeyev] If I understand you correctly, the creation of norms governing the formation of the representative organs of power in the regions has been entirely transferred to the local executive power. But does it have some kind of coherent legal basis for this activity?

[Samoylov] Yes, undoubtedly. A series of edicts of the Russian Federation president on stage-by-stage constitutional reform were elaborated. These edicts concerned the general principles of the organization of state power in the federation components and of the reform of the organs of local self-government, the timetable for holding elections, the role of administrations in holding them, and the powers of the representative organs.

In addition there are individual articles in the Russian Constitution which define the level of the organs of self-government and the character of their activity, although the details are certainly not spelled out in the Fundamental Law.

At the moment a legal basis incorporating national, local, and historical features is being created in the regions on the basis of the president's edicts. But, insofar as the president's edicts are the basis of the election campaign, we do not want them to be discredited. Therefore, normative documents elaborated in the regions undergo mandatory expert analysis here, in the president's administration, and are invariably coordinated with the Central Electoral Commission. True, the federation components approach the creation of this legal basis in different ways. In Yaroslavl and Penza Oblasts and Stavropol Kray the matter has even gone before the courts.

The documents that have been adopted contain gaps, errors, and even deviations from juridical norms. These flaws from both the legal and organizational points of view are, incidentally, common to the majority of regions.

[Dorofeyev] Could you name the basic ones?

[Samoylov] There are several. First, as before, there is a noticeable gravitation toward the principle of nominating candidates according to the territorial administration principle. Thus there can be a five to sixfold difference in the size of the population of the various rayons of an oblast or kray, but there were proposals to elect an equal number of deputies from each. But this is a violation of the constitutional principle of citizens' equal suffrage. Second, there is the mandatory allocation of guaranteed seats for various national groups. Nowadays this is an unconstitutional norm.

There is so far no uniform position on the participation of representatives of the executive organs of power in the elections either. The range of opinions runs from a total ban, as in St. Petersburg and Nizhniy Novgorod, for example, to, in effect, total authorization of such participation. Thus following the 30 January elections in Penza Oblast, 20 of the 45 deputies are heads of administrations or their deputies.

Article 66 of the the Russian Federation Constitution assigns the right to adopt the charter of a kray or oblast to the region's representative organ of power; however, the administrations of Vladimir, Vologda, and a number of other oblasts are trying to submit charters to local referenda. But the documents are crude from the legal point of view, and moreover, there is no law on local referenda. Thus the basis is laid for future conflict.

[Dorofeyev] However, elections have already been held in 15 regions of Russia. Can the executive branch of power be considered satisfied with the outcome of these elections?

[Samoylov] It is mainly people of the old so-called party and economic aktiv who have been voted on to all the newly elected organs. And now, when a significant part of the budget will be formed at local level, the expenditure part could be based, not on the interest of the region, but on the collective or private interests of the local political or economic elite. This is alarming. Given such a makeup the representative organs of power will continue to direct their activity toward resolving day-to-day economic questions, although these have now been withdrawn from their jurisdiction.

A worrying trend is the virtual absence of lawyers in the new representative organs. After all, the legislative function is to become the basic activity of these organs. Nor are there any economists in the classical sense of the word. Though it is possible to look at these problems from another point of view. Voters have entrusted mandates to the people who control the real levers of power, and who therefore will be able to do something for them.

[Dorofeyev] Does this apply to all the federation components?

[Samoylov] In principle—yes. There is no serious reform of the new organs of power even in the republics. As a result of elections here even the leaders have on the whole stayed the same, as, for example, in Aldygey, Altay, Tuva... True, reform has been carried out thoughtfully and effectively in Kabardino-Balkaria, Mariy El, and the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia).

[Dorofeyev] And are there regions where elections have taken place without coordination with the Central Electoral Commission?

[Samoylov] No, there are no such cases, but a number of territories have put well-argued requests to the Central Electoral Commission and the President's Administration to postpone elections to later dates. The requests of Sverdlovsk, Chelyabinsk, Saratov, and Krasnodar Administrations have been granted. Nor are objections being made to the decisions of a number of republics where elections will be held in summer or fall 1994.

[Dorofeyev] What forecasts can be made on the basis of the results of the elections which have been held in 15 regions?

[Samoylov] Some conclusions can be drawn already. Evidently, the voter turnout will be considerably lower than for the elections to the Federal Assembly. On the other hand, the competition for deputies' seats is high: between five and 15 candidates. All parties and movements are displaying the most energetic and committed attention to the election campaign, but their leaders will not, as a rule, be elected to the local dumas. Therefore candidates are mainly trying to distance themselves from political parties (although they have a definite political "complexion") and prefer to stand as independent candidates or as representatives of groups of voters. I suggest that between 40 and 50 percent of deputies will turn out to be heads of administrations at all levels.

Speaking of the results as a whole, in my view it will be mainly people who want to be involved in practical business, and not in politics, who will succeed. And this will probably enable political disputes to be somehow avoided. God grant, as the saying goes, that this mood continues among deputies and voters alike....

[Dorofeyev] And finally, Sergey Nikolayevich, a question which nowadays concerns many people—the timetable for holding the elections. There is a very wide range of opinions here, and only quite recently the Russian Federation president's Public Chamber actually recommended that the process of holding elections to the representative organs of power be extended until June 1994. What is your opinion on this subject?

[Samoylov] This concerns the organs of local self-government. Indeed, elections were planned in 48 regions of Russia from January through March, but the quality of the legal basis raises doubts in many political forces.

The executive at the local level proceeds on the premise that simultaneous elections will help to increase voter turnout and save money. The president's administration shares the concern of the Public Chamber.

From our point of view, it more correct to hold elections to the regional representative organ of power first. It elaborates and ratifies the normative basis for the organs of local self-government, using the existing administration documents and the edicts of the Russian Federation president.

Though I have already said that there is no strict regulation as to the timeframes...

Economic Issues

Kola Nuclear Power Station in 'Critical Situation'

LD1403173694 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1315 GMT 14 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vasiliy Belousov]

[Text] Murmansk, 14 Mar—Two of the four generating sets at the Kola nuclear power station were shut down today because of various faults. A routine shutdown of another reactor is planned for 22 March.

Bearing in mind that the station provides more than 60 percent of all the electricity generated in Murmansk Oblast, it is not difficult to imagine the consequences. It is not only enterprises on the Kola Peninsula that will suffer. In the first place, "supplies of electricity to neighboring Karelia and Leningrad Oblast will be halted," Vitaliy Meshkov, general director of the Kola power system said today at a meeting with the head of the oblast administration.

Apart from purely technical faults, the work of Europe's northernmost nuclear power station has been affected by debts owed by consumers, including some in neighboring Karelia. The shortage of resources is preventing power engineers at the Kola station from carrying out maintenance work on time and recharging the reactors with nuclear fuel according to schedule. Although top Moscow ministry officials and the Russian Government know about the disastrous situation at the nuclear power station, the power engineers are not receiving any help from them. In addition, because of unprecedented customs tariffs, they cannot even obtain equipment provided as aid by firms in Scandinavian countries to ensure the safe operation of the nuclear power station.

In view of the critical situation, senior officials from the station and the Kola grid will fly to Moscow tomorrow, in order to inform the head of government of this personally and to ask him to adopt measures.

Soskovets Holds News Conference on Reform Moves

LD1403145894 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1100 GMT 14 Mar 94

[T. Aldoshina report; from the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] The government is apparently to get involved in solving the problems of reciprocal nonpayments between enterprises. [First Deputy Prime Minister] Oleg Soskovets announced at a news conference today that this is really a problem for enterprise managers to resolve. The first deputy prime minister is of the view that nonpayments are the result of poor management and badly organized relations between suppliers and consumers.

As for the wage arrears in a number of industries, the Ministry of Labor has been instructed to investigate and to take measures. Soskovets reiterated that the government intends to strengthen the role of the state in economic development. It is not yet clear how this will look in practice, as Oleg Soskovets was not inclined to talk specifics. He answered questions with either platitudes or statements such as: The government is studying this problem, or the government is working on this.

Incidentally, Soskovets' meeting with journalists today was the first of a series of news conferences on the implentation of the program of economic reforms in the period up to 1995. We will probably hear specific answers to all issues later.

Cites Budget Priorities

LD1403194094 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Video report by correspondent T. Aldoshina; from the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] [Correspondent T. Aldoshina] Today, Oleg Soskovets held a news conference on the results of the government's extended session. He said that the main directions of the country's development have been indicated in the president's message. The first deputy prime minister named the following among priority areas in the economy: The fuel and power complex, industry, agriculture, conversion, and restructuring of the social sphere. Commenting on information by Yegor Gaydar that the draft budget provides for an increase in expenditure on the upkeep of the state apparatus and not for social needs, Oleg Soskovets said:

[Begin recording] [Soskovets] It is the normal thing that when the state apparatus increases, the social sphere is reduced.

[Aldoshina] But still, precisely this situation is set out in the draft budget, isn't it?

[Soskovets] We have not yet put out the draft budget anywhere. [end recording]

[Aldoshina] The draft budget, according to the first deputy prime minister, may be passed on to the State Duma this week. Commenting on the question of Gaydar's intention to return to the government, Oleg Soskovets said: That is his problem. [end recording]

Shokhin Describes Current Economic Situation

LD1403213994 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2051 GMT 14 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Oleg Velichko]

[Text] Moscow March 14 TASS—Russian Economic Minister Aleksandr Shokhin met U.S. ex-President Richard Nixon on Monday to discuss relations between Russia and international organizations.

Shokhin described some peculiarities of the economic reform in Russia at a press conference following the meeting.

Acceptance of "the debts of the former Soviet Union, the burden of Russia's "donorhood" in regard to other CIS member states" make economic transformations in the country peculiar. In this connection, he confirmed that the government intends "to go ahead with reserved financial policies".

"On the one hand, the cabinet succeeded in getting the inflation rate down to an all-time low of 9.9 percent, on the other - the slump in production continues to grow, which results in a drop in efficacy of tax extraction as a whole," Shokhin said as he described contradictory nature of the current situation in Russia.

According to Shokhin, the government will "find it hard to keep within the planned limits of the budget deficit", unless it takes "extraordinary measures and looks for new sources of income". When working out the draft budget, "several expenditure items should be specified, including national defence expenses", Shokhin said.

Cites Inflation Figures

LD1403184494 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1732 GMT 14 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Oleg Velichko]

[Text] Moscow March 14 TASS—The Russian Government "will be able to keep monthly inflation within ten per cent" in the next few months, according to Russian Minister of Economics Aleksandr Shokhin. The announcement was made at his meeting with former U.S. President Richard Nixon who is in Moscow on a private visit.

Shokhin said that the adoption of the budget is a key element in the activity of the government, stressing that the government's "moral status will depend" on the results of the debates on the draft budget in the State Duma.

Shokhin noted that monthly inflation in February was below ten per cent, the record low in the last 2.5 years. "We promised to the IMF to reach this level only by the end of the year," Shokhin said.

Stavropol in Barter Deals With Bashkirs, Azerbaijan

PM1503085994 Moscow SELSKAYA ZHIZN in Russian 12 Mar 94 p 1

[Unattributed report under "How We Will Enter the Field" rubric: "Fuel in Exchange for Grain"]

[Text] Stavropol—In exchange for 200,000 tonnes of grain, Stavropol Kray inhabitants will receive from Bashkortostan diesel fuel, gasoline, and the oils necessary for spring sowing. This decision was adopted during a working trip to Stavropol Kray by Aleksandr Rykov, Bashkortostan minister of material resources and interregional ties.

The people of Stavropol Kray have also concluded an accord on an exchange of grain for petroleum products with Azerbaijan's oil refiners.

Military Issues

Military Budget Chief on Army Finances

PM1503124094 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 12 Mar 94 pp 1-2

[Interview with Colonel General Vasiliy Vorobyev, chief of the Russian Federation Defense Ministry Main Military Budget and Finance Directorate, by Lieutenant Colonel Ivan Ivanyuk; date and place not given: "Military Budget Without Abstractions Or Illusions"]

[Text] This interview could have been justified on a purely routine basis: The federal budget for the new year is being adopted, it is necessary to talk about expenditure on the country's defenses. But it is hard to recall such a powerful upsurge in public interest in an event that is, generally speaking, a "formality." The editorial office has received numerous queries prompted by reports appearing in the mass media to the effect that it is planned to slash the military budget and that many articles of the Law on the Status of Servicemen could be repealed, reports which have caused concern among our readers. Last year's "budget tribulations," delays of two or three months in paying wages and servicemen's pay, disruptions to leave, and unfulfilled plans are still fresh in many people's memories. Is all this going to be repeated this year, only worse? We decided to seek first-hand answers, so to speak, to this and other questions which are currently of concern to Army and Navy personnel, workers at defense enterprises, and Armed Forces veterans.

[Ivanyuk] Vasiliy Vasilyevich, the Finance Ministry's attempts to save on military spending have already been the subject of a political assessment: The proposed level of appropriations will lead to the ruin of the country's defense complex, and in particular the Russian Army, which is basically the sole island of stability on the territory of the former USSR....

[Vorobyev] I am no politician, and I would like to refrain from commentaries of that kind. As far as the military budget is concerned, I am prepared to speak about it in detail and to cite illustrations to confirm the validity and authenticity of every figure. The sums we are asking for are not plucked out of thin air. The need for defense appropriations for 1994 is defined in accordance with the requirements of the Russian Federation Law "On Defense," which envisages a reduction in the Armed Forces, taking into account the State Defense Order approved by the Russian Federation Government decree of 21 December 1993 and decisions recently adopted by the country's top leadership on questions of defense, the financial stabilization of the economy, and state social support for the population.

We are aware that the Russian economy is currently going through a difficult period. Therefore the calculations sent to the Finance Ministry contain nothing superfluous. The proposed draft has, above all, a clearly expressed social thrust. The Defense Ministry pins great hopes on Russian Federation President B.N. Yeltsin's Message, his speech in the Federal Assembly on 24 February this year. He said quite specifically: "In 1994 we have to put an end to the deleterious practice of one-sided concessions. This applies, among other things, to the defense budget. It must not be forgotten that spending on defense is not at all the same thing as spending on war. These resources go to finance a significant part of our science. These resources go to build apartments for homeless officers' families. These resources go to maintain our children who are serving in the Armed Forces."

[Ivanyuk] What does this mean in actual figures?

[Vorobyev] I do not think there is any point in naming specific sums. These have not yet been finally confirmed, and anyway, given the present rate of inflation, they do not tell you much. If we look at relative figures, 56 percent of the total military budget consists of expenditure on servicemen's pay and wages for civilian personnel, paying for rations and pensions, building housing, maintaining military hospitals, clinics, sanatoriums, rest homes, and kindergartens, and carrying out tasks in connection with the provision of facilities for troops withdrawn from Eastern Europe and the nearby foreign countries. Furthermore, the appropriations for the purchase of arms and military equipment and on scientific research and experimental and design work also include relevant expenditure at defense complex enterprises, which accounts for at least 45 percent of the total. Thus social expenditure, or, to put it another way, the minimum expenditure necessary for people's normal existence, accounts for a total of three-fourths of all defense expenditure.

[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA interpolation] Our Information: The Finance Ministry has cut by a factor of 2.4 the sum requested by the Defense Ministry. The amount allowed for maintaining the Army and Navy is set at 61 percent of the sum requested; for arms, military equipment, and property—21 percent; for scientific and technical output—41 percent; for capital construction and major repairs—32 percent; and for servicemen's pensions—76 percent.

In January 1994, 1 trillion rubles [R] was paid over to the Defense Ministry. Appropriations under the quota established by the Finance Ministry for February, totaling R1.3 trillion, were transferred bit by bit, up to 10 March. There was a chronic shortage of money. And the R371 billion which it is planned to allocate in March for maintaining the Army and Navy (under section one of the military budget) is not enough even to cover the servicemen's pay. [interpolation ends]

[Ivanyuk] One cannot help getting the impression that the Finance Ministry's proposals for cutting the military budget are divorced from real life and are purely theoretical and abstract in nature....

[Vorobyev] This approach could indeed be called abstract. And not only because the "human factor," as they used to call it, is not taken into account. Take the actual methodology of the calculations. The Finance Ministry, in planning defense spending, takes as a basis the proportion of gross domestic product (GDP) accounted for by military spending in 1993, and automatically carries over this indicator, namely 5.02 percent, to this year's GDP. But tell me, what is the basis for calculating that GDP will increase by only a factor of 4.5? What decline or increase in production does this incorporate? What account is taken of the dynamic of price increases? It must be said that last year the Finance Ministry failed to take account of the actual trends in prices for output purchased by the Defense Ministry. For instance, budget expenditure on the purchase of arms and military equipment in 1993 was index-linked, in the main, by a factor of 2.1, although in a number of instances the actual increase was between fivefold and 12-fold. Or take military uniform. This sustained a 10- or 11-fold increase in price over the year. At the beginning of this year a complete soldier's uniform cost R500,000.

Many other objective factors were—and are—absolutely left out of the reckoning. At the moment, in essence, all Russia's Armed Forces are in motion: The troops' withdrawal is in progress, they are changing stations, their structure is changing, expenditure on the provision of facilities is increasing. It takes 55 trains just to move one motorized infantry division. You can imagine the other expenses that this entails. And maintaining military camps beyond the Urals, which is where a significant proportion of troop units and formations have been redeployed, is much more expensive than in the European part of the former USSR. The Finance Ministry also takes no account of the actual tasks tackled by the Russian Army and Navy in the present difficult situation. But fulfilling peacekeeping functions in the "hot spots" costs the Armed Forces far more, of course, than systematic training in stationary conditions. So we want just one thing: for Finance Ministry workers to grasp once and for all the volume and structure of the military budget, and not to try to mislead the government about it every time.

[Ivanyuk] Another question that arises is: Why take as a basis this bizarre figure of 5.02 percent—with hundredths of a percent—of GDP? This comparison with last year would be logical if last year's finances had been optimum, or at least satisfactory. But that is not so. And defense funds were saved in a manner directly detrimental to combat readiness. Because of the fuel shortage, combat training plans were not met, planes did not fly, ships lay rusting at the quayside, equipment did not get repaired, housing was not built, food reserves were not renewed, and so forth. And moreover, on the results of the year, the Defense Ministry ended up a major debtor....

[Vorobyev] To this day we have yet to settle up with all the suppliers of military equipment and property, supplies, and services. Out of a debt which totaled R2.2 trillion at the beginning of the year, only 1 trillion has been extinguished. Overall, the Defense Ministry's minimum requirement for appropriations of R10 trillion was only 75 percent fulfilled last year, taking the repayment of debts into account. The Finance Ministry could have achieved a still more gratifying picture and a still lower proportional level of defense spending this year if, last year, it had allocated not 75 percent, but, say, 50 or 40 percent of what the Army and Navy needed. Let's think straight: How much longer can the Armed Forces be kept without money, with only insignificant sums being allocated eight or 10 times a month, as has been the case for nearly a year? For another six months? A year? And then what?

Some people declare that in the developed countries of the West, military spending accounts for not more than 3-5 percent of gross national product. Those who think this fail to take account of one thing—the actual volume of GNP in those countries and in ours is not comparable. As a result the sums allocated for defense are not comparable either. And it is not a question of "flexing military muscles"; the point is that the reform of the Russian Army and Navy should be carried out gradually, without sociopolitical upheavals. Nor can we disregard the country's geopolitical location, the role that Russia continues to play in the world community, the structure of the Armed Forces, and many other factors.

[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA interpolation] Our Information: In 1994 the U.S. GNP will be in excess of $6 trillion, and total military expenditure will be $280 billion, which comes to about $1,100 for every citizen of America. In the current year, total military spending per capita will be $730 in Britain, $810 in France, $815 in Norway, and $500 in Greece and the FRG.

[Vorobyev continues] It must also be taken into account that ever since 1989, even while the Soviet Union still existed, expenditure on defense has fallen every year, mainly through reducing the numerical strength of the Army and Navy and cutting purchases of arms and military equipment.

It would theoretically be possible to adopt the appropriations included in the draft budget for 1994 at the levels proposed by the Russian Finance Ministry. But the real consequences of that step must be borne in mind. What does it mean, for instance, if the Defense Ministry purchases 20-25 percent of the arms and military equipment stipulated in the State Order for 1994? Not only a reduction in the troops' combat capability and an irreversible lag in defense production technology, but also the stoppage of many enterprises and a mass upsurge in unemployment. Let us look at another item of expenditure. Given the proposed level of finance for housing construction, servicemen will fail to receive 24,000 apartments planned in the State Defense Order for 1994. The number of homeless families in the Army and Navy could rise to 155,000 by the end of the year as a result. Need I continue the list?

I am convinced that everyone in the Russian Armed Forces, from the defense minister to any private doing his compulsory service, would agree to a devastating budget for the Army if he knew that it would result in an economic miracle in the near future. But miracles do not happen, and the only way to produce any tangible results in terms of economic recovery is to add to the income side of the budget, not to manipulate its expenditure side. As for making economical use of the resources allocated, we are prepared to make savings and we are doing everything to that end.

[Ivanyuk] As you know, the Ministry of Labor recently put a proposal to the government to increase the minimum wage by 40 percent from 1 March. The adoption of this decision will entail an increase in wages in the budget sphere. Many of our readers are worried: Could it turn out that the military will once again be left to last? After all, last year it was the rule—and this "rule" is regarded as an outrage—to increase servicemen's pay a month later, or to a lesser extent, than for other "budget-funded" people.

[Vorobyev] I hope this will not happen. We have submitted appropriate proposals regarding the indexation of servicemen's pay and the wages of the Defense Ministry's civilian personnel, and it would be nice to think that the proposals will be taken fully into account. At the same time the concern that has arisen in military collectives is understandable: Some people are not above making savings even here, at the expense of the soldier or the officer. Thus, in similar conditions the Finance Ministry has twice tried to index-link only servicemen's pay, "forgetting" about allowances for rank. But the Finance Ministry is not the government, and the government did not permit such "innovations." We have repeatedly been aware of Prime Minister V.S. Chernomyrdin's support on these matters. After all, our proposals are not based on excessive demands. It would be possible to forget about incomplete indexation or delays in it, if the soldier's job was among those that are highly paid. But in reality the picture is different. Let us take, for comparison, a pilot in civil aviation and a military airman. They experience similar psychological and physical stresses, they bear the same high responsibility. How does the state value their labor? A captain at Sheremetyevo-2 gets up to R3 million a month. That sum is made up of the salary, with the addition of the sector coefficient and other supplementary coefficients, additional payments for qualifications, unhealthy working conditions, and length of service, bonuses, and other payments, such as payments for total flying time per month, the commander's minimum landing payment, payment for working particularly difficult routes.... In the Russian Air Force a plane's captain, a major and first-class pilot with 15 or more years of service, receives something like R400,000 a month, that is, between one-fifth and one-sixth as much. This includes everything—supplements for length of service, qualifications, special conditions of service and material aid, and the lump sum on the results of the year, calculated per month.

[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA interpolation] Our Information: In 1909-1917 a captain or company commander in the Russian Army used to receive per year: salary—R900, mess allowance—R360, additional pay—R480 (total: R1,740). In addition he was paid a lodging allowance of up to R544 a year, expenses for acquiring essential kit in field conditions and for the purchase of a horse, harness, carriage, etc., batman money of R10, and ration money (campaign and field rations in wartime). For a captain, the campaign allowance was R1.57, and the field allowance R3.50 per day.

According to the draft State Income and Expenditure Inventory for 1912, a worker's average wage was R244 a year.

At the beginning of the 20th century in Russia a kilogram of bread cost 6-15 kopeks, meat 17-33 kopeks, sugar 37 kopeks, butter 62-70 kopeks, a liter of vodka was 48-60 kopeks, a pair of shoes R3, and a pair of boots R7.

[Vorobyev continues] Throughout the world, a soldier's work is paid more highly than work requiring similar effort in civilian sectors, and everywhere there is a highly developed system of concessions. And this is easy to explain: A person who is not bound by an oath or the requirements of military regulations is free to change his job if something—such as the pay—does not suit him. But where is a nuclear submarine commander—who, incidentally, receives no more than a fighter pilot—to go, if he does decide to sever his ties with the military department, at great cost to himself? There should be compensation for servicemen, in the form of higher wages, for restrictions of this kind on civil rights. And for other drawbacks—the nomadic way of life, the lack of opportunity for wives to find jobs, etc. It must be said that this approach is enshrined in the Law on the Status of Servicemen, but in practice, unfortunately, the law is not realized as it should be.

In terms of cost, the law has only been half implemented. The reason is well known—the relevant provisions of the law are not backed up by an implementation mechanism, and appropriations have not been allocated. In this connection we receive many complaints from the troops and from Defense Ministry pensioners, to which it is impossible to give a satisfactory reply. Civil and military courts have recently been issuing rulings practically every day in favor of servicemen and Armed Forces veterans who appeal over violations of their rights to privileges laid down in existing legislation. But even the court decisions lead nowhere. To crown it all, the mass media blame the defense minister and the services under him for not fulfilling laws signed by the president of the Russian Federation.

[Ivanyuk] But as if it was not enough that after more than a year this law has not even become fully operational, there have also been—and still are—attempts to "torpedo" it, to revoke privileges for servicemen and their families, including some that have existed for a long time. Just the other day people in the Army were disturbed by the news that the Finance Ministry has spawned yet another proposal for cutting servicemen's privileges. The impression is that some people are deliberately "inflaming" the atmosphere in the military collectives....

[Vorobyev] First of all, I would like to stress that the Army and Navy have no fabulous, extraordinary privileges—in the main they correspond to the system of benefits and compensations that have become established in our country. For instance, members of many professions receive free uniform, are able to supplement their wardrobes at half price, enjoy free travel to and from their vacation center or free food, or have privileges under housing or, say, land legislation.

But for some reason there are proposals to repeal or suspend the operation of certain laws, edicts, and decrees in connection with social guarantees specifically for servicemen. Some of these proposals can only be described as ludicrous. For instance, it is proposed to retain the food ration, but anyone who declines to take it, instead of being compensated for its full value, would be paid compensation equivalent to one minimum wage. But everyone will simply start taking the rations, and that will considerably complicate the task of procuring, storing, and issuing food and will entail additional costs. That is why the prime minister, in his interview for a RIA correspondent, described such proposals, bluntly but, I believe, rightly, as "real blackmail."

[Ivanyuk] Vasiliy Vasilyevich, I cannot but agree with what you say, so do not take the next question, which is rather awkward, as an attempt to engage in a dispute. I have often heard it said, even at high levels, that the stance of the Defense Ministry, which is demanding to be fully financed in conditions of an acute budget deficit, is unproductive and inappropriate to a market economy. How would you comment on that view?

[Vorobyev] I too have heard such views expressed. On the one hand, they are rather superficial, and on the other, they do not show good will. The theory that was once current, that social problems in the Army and Navy could and should be tackled by the use of extrabudgetary funds, has yet to bear fruit. The actual return on the numerous funds set up in this context is close to zero. And how can anyone seriously talk about maintaining—even partially maintaining—the army of a vast country like Russia on, so to speak, a voluntary basis? This is the state's task, and the state should take care of it in full. And a rigorous financial policy should be aimed at securing the military budget as a priority, not at reducing it.

The Russian Defense Ministry is today placed within very tight bounds and is virtually without the possibility of earning resources. As an example, let me cite the sale of surplus property, as a result of which 1,600 apartments were acquired for servicemen last year. Yet on many other questions a far stricter system of restrictions has been imposed than in foreign states' armies, which are incomparably better financed. Thus, for instance, in Turkey a huge entrepreneurial structure operates under the patronage of the Armed Forces, including dozens of enterprises, as well as banks, and this makes it possible to provide additional social protection for servicemen. There are dozens of other projects which could be implemented in the Russian Armed Forces to rectify their financial position. In this respect we are urgently studying possible options with the Finance Ministry and other economic departments.

[Ivanyuk] It would be nice to think that everything you have spoken of is at the center of the attention of the government and parliamentarians as they set about examining the country's budget for 1994, and that the Defense Ministry's interests will all be taken into account.

[Vorobyev] We are hoping for that, too. Only I would make one small reservation: The proposals we have submitted on the military budget are dictated not by departmental interests, but by concern for maintaining the country's defense capability at least at the minimum necessary level. I would like to believe that the State Duma, the Federation Council, and the government understand this and will take account of all the circumstances in making their final decision.

Media Issues

Ministry Cuts Off RTV Video Feed Channels

LD1503113594 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 0400 GMT 15 Mar 94

[Text] We have some urgent problems here on Russian TV today. For example, today the Ministry of Communications is cutting us off from all channels of transmission of video material from other cities and countries.

Yes, talking on-screen for 20 minutes is not one of the easiest tasks for a newscaster. It seems that Russians will have to do without bright pictures as well as having to do without good-quality bread. Well, that's enough gloomy news; we do have something to boast about: We are the national TV station.

RTV Chief Warns on Budget Cut for Broadcasting

PM1403112394 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 11 Mar 94 p 9

[Comment by Anatoliy Lysenko, general director of Russian State Television and Radio Company, under general headline: "Tales from the Vienna Woods"—last paragraph is editorial postscript]

[Text] We asked Anatoliy Lysenko, general director of the Russian State Television and Radio Company, to comment on the situation which has taken shape:

Last week the Ministry of Finance drew up another draft state budget. I do not know how good or bad it is in other spheres, but as regards the state television and radio companies.... Under this draft, which has not yet been approved by the government, it is proposed to allocate for the funding of the television and radio company, on average, approximately one-fourth of the amount that we need for a minimum normal existence. This means that Russian radio, for example, will be broadcasting for something like five hours a day, and Russian television even less—four hours and 20 minutes. So we will have to distribute our air time roughly as follows: from 0730 through 0900 hours for those who are already awake. From 1600 through 1730 for children, so that they do not forget that the television has been invented. In the evening it will be possible to put out "Vesti," followed by a 10- or 15-minute program with a topical account of the government's concern for its people.

I certainly do not think that the quality of all our programs is on a high level. And yet an important question occurs to me with regard to this draft budget: What does the Finance Ministry expect those people who are accustomed to sitting on the sofa in front of the television after work in the evening to do with themselves if the television set is showing nothing? We could think up a lot of answer to this question, but none of them in society's favor. This is not to mention the fact that we will have to dismiss three-fourths of our employees without a leaving gratuity.... As is known, we were born to turn a fairytale into a true story. Sometimes it is a very frightening fairytale. Although I am a great fan of science fiction, I find it hard to believe that, before approving the draft, the government will review the question of television funding. But there is still a glimmer of hope.

[Postcript] While this issue was being made up, the problem of funding state television and radio companies has developed further. The president has met with the heads of "Ostankino" and the Russian State Television and Radio Company and promised them support, saying that there must definitely be state television in Russia. "Although the budget will be cut just the same," Anatoliy Lysenko declared after meeting with the president. "The question is: by how much? But the government must decide this."

Yeltsin Edict on Presidential Information Agency

PM1403154794 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 12 Mar 94 First Edition p 4

[Russian Federation Presidential Edict No. 449 signed by Yeltsin and dated 4 March 1994, "On the Presidential Administration's Information Support Administration," accompanied by associated statute]

[Text] With a view to providing timely and objective information to citizens in the Russian Federation and other countries on Russia's state policy, on the activities of the Russian Federation president and his administration, and on highly important events and their evaluation, I decree that:

1. A Russian Federation Presidential Administration Information Support Administration shall be set up.
2. The attached Statute on the Russian Federation Presidential Administration's Information Support Administration is hereby ratified.
3. Petr Sergeyevich Filippov is appointed chief of the Russian Federation Presidential Administration Information Support Administration.
4.The leader of the Russian Federation Presidential Administration shall ratify the structure and staffing of the Russian Federation Presidential Administration's Information Support Administration on the basis of a maximum staff for the administration of 40.
5. The Russian Federation president's State Legal Administration shall submit proposals under the established procedure within a two-week period on bringing Russian Federation presidential acts into line with this edict.
6. This edict comes into force from the moment it is signed.

[Signed] Russian Federation President B. Yeltsin
[Dated] Moscow, the Kremlin
4 March 1994
No. 449

Statute on the Russian Federation Presidential Administration's Information Support Administration

I. General Provisions

1. The Russian Federation Presidential Administration Information Support Administration (hereinafter, the administration) is a structural subunit of the Russian Federation Presidential Administration.

2. The legal basis for the administration's activity is the Russian Federation Constitution, Russian Federation laws, Russian Federation presidential edicts and directives, and this statute.

II. The Administration's Tasks

3. The administration's main tasks are:
to supply the mass media with objective and accurate material on the policies of the Russian Federation president and Government, the highly important socioeconomic and political problems of reforming Russian society, and the measures being taken to resolve them;
to help the mass media to extensively disseminate forecasts for the development of events in the Russian Federation in connection with the decisions made by Russian Federation state power bodies;
to organize explanatory work with a view to informing citizens of the Russian Federation and other countries through the mass media of the Russian Federation president's position on draft laws submitted, issues under discussion, and decisions being made;
to cover in the mass media measures linked with implementing targeted programs on the most important socioeconomic issues, as well as the political processes taking place in the country.

III. The Administration's Functions

4. In order to implement the tasks entrusted to it, the administration carries out the following functions:
organizing the provision of material to the mass media on the results of analytical research and forecasts of Russian society's socioeconomic and political development;
promoting the recruitment of skilled specialists to discuss current problems of the reform of Russian society in the mass media;
ensuring analysis of media reaction to the Russian Federation president's actions.

IV. Supporting the Administration's Activity

5. The administration's activity is carried out on the basis of instructions from the Russian Federation president and the leader of the Russian Federation Presidential Administration, and recommendations from the Russian Federation president's Expert Analysis Council.

6. In order to carry out its functions the administration is entitled to:
request and obtain necessary material from the leaders of Russian Federation Presidential Administration structural subunits, Russian Federation state power bodies, and state power bodies in the Russian Federation components;
hold conferences and meetings with representatives of organs of state power in Russian Federation components and with representatives of the Russian Federation president;
recruit Russian Federation Presidential Administration staff and other specialists to appear in the media;
carry out targeted and operational measures in conjunction with the Russian Federal Service for Television and Radio Broadcasting and the Russian Federation Committee for the Press;
ensure the preparation and publication of popular scientific material on the most important issues of socioeconomic policy, constitutional reform, and the law;
conclude contracts for the elaboration and implementation of information campaigns;
make use under the established procedure of data bases held by the Russian Federation Presidential Administration and Russian Federation state power bodies;
utilize state, including government, communications systems;
recruit academics and specialists on a contract basis in accordance with the plan for expert scientific work ratified by the leader of the Russian Federation Presidential Administration.

7. Material, technical, documentation, information, transport, social, and consumer support for the administration's activity is provided by the relevant subunits of the Russian Federation Presidential Administration.

V. The Administration's Leadership

8. The administration is headed by a chief appointed and dismissed by the Russian Federation president.

9. The administration chief has deputies appointed and dismissed by the Russian Federation president.

10. The administration chief:
leads the administration and is personally responsible for the results of its activity;
submits proposals on the administration's structure and the appointment and dismissal of administration staff to the leader of the Russian Federation Presidential Administration;
assigns duties among his deputies and the administration's structural subunits;
signs official documents on questions of the organization of activity within the administration;
submits under the established procedure proposals on rewards for the administration's staff.

Ostankino Seen Acquiring Pro-Chernomyrdin Bias

MK1103141094 Moscow MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS in Russian 11 Mar 94 p 2

[Unattributed report under the "In Brief" rubric: "Who Calls the Shots at Ostankino?"]

[Text] To all appearances, Aleksandr Yakovlev, current chief of the federal television service, has virtually no role to play there; the shots in the television empire are called by his first deputy, Valentin Lazutkin, who has been orienting himself toward Prime Minister Chernomyrdin.

MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS has learned from an informed source that things have gone so far that the list of news items for the 21:00 "Novosti" news program is sent during the day to Government Press Service chief Sergeyev for approval. A report on Yegor Gaydar's recent press conference is a case in point: His quips about Chernomyrdin and "laboratory chiefs" liberally quoted by the mass media have disappeared without a trace, and Yegor Timurovich himself was portrayed as an apologizing retiree.

Government, ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA Sign Contract

PM1403135794 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 12 Mar 94 First Edition p 5

[Unattributed report: "ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA's Status Determined"]

[Text] A contract has been concluded between the Russian Federation Government and the ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA editorial office. It was signed 10 March in the Russian Federation Government House by V.P. Kvasov, Russian Federation minister and leader of the Russian Federation Government Apparatus, and ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA Chief Editor N.I. Polezhayeva.

These documents define the rights and duties of the Russian Federation Government as the newspaper's founder and editorial office. Perhaps for the first time relations between an official publication and its founder are built on a legal and civilized basis. Previously, as we remember, the operational administration of a newspaper right up to instructions over the telephone was considered normal. The editorial office's new charter and the above-mentioned contract unequivocally forbid the founder to interfere in the activity of the editorial office. And if we are speaking of control then the contract envisages it only in relation to finances.

That is entirely natural inasmuch as the government will assign funds to its newspaper. But not 100 percent of the funds, as used to be the case, not to feed an expense mechanism, but in fact for finished output—for the preparation, publication, and mass distribution of the state's official documents.

[illegible] that does not mean that ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA can become a departmental bulletin. According to the contract the Russian Federation Government has the right to publish its own official materials in the newspaper free of charge. Federal and regional organs of executive power and the structural subdivisions of the government apparatus build their relations with the editorial office on a contract basis.

With the signing of the contract ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA's status has been definitively determined as an official state publication.

Russian TV, Radio To Revert to Old Place-Names

LD1303164494 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1520 GMT 12 Mar 94

[Text] As you know, the process of the disintegration of the USSR and sovereignization of the republics within Russia was accompanied by a forced introduction to the Russian language of new names of some states, republics, their capitals, and some cities. At the same time, in most cases it was an attempt to replace the names adopted in the Russian language with the names in the languages of these states, republics, and cities. However, in any language any borrowed word is always subordinated to new grammar and pronunciation laws and, in practice, never retains its original form.

Therefore Russian language speakers have as many rights to pronounce Ashkhabad, Kushka, Kirgizia, and Belorussia, as speakers of other languages, for example, have every right to use Russian names in the form adopted in their languages. In this particular case it is correspondence to linguistic laws that is under discussion.

The Institute of Russian Language of the Russian Academy of Sciences supports the intention to go back to old names. From 15 March, Russian television and radio will begin using them consistently so that from now on Almaty will again become Alma-Ata, Bashkortostan—Bashkiria. Our congratulations to you.

It would be interesting to know what will be the reaction at the Ostankino TV and Radio Company since this initiative comes from the Russian TV and Radio Company.

Federal Assembly

Duma Drops Debate on Chechnya From Agenda

LD1403165094 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1406 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] The Council of the Russian State Duma at a session on Monday dropped from the agenda of the lower house of parliament the question of the situation in Chechnya. This was reported to journalists by the head of a parliamentary group and State Minister for Nationalities Sergey Shakhray.

He said Communists, Liberal-Democrats, Democrats and the Agrarian Party voted against the debate as they felt the matter should be settled by the president himself. "These groups are either afraid of Dudayev, or of a controversy about the matter", Shakhray announced.

Shakhray came out with the initiative of discussing the matter in both houses of the Federal Assembly.

Upper Chamber To Debate Prosecutor-General Issue

LD1503115894 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1056 GMT 15 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Lyudmila Yermakova]

[Text] Moscow March 15 TASS—The Federation Council (upper house of the Russian parliament) put the item on the prosecutor-general on the agenda of its fourth session which opened on Tuesday.

Issa Kostoyev, chairman of the council committee on constitutional legislation, explained at the discussion of this proposal that the chamber is to receive representations from the Russian president on the resignation of the former prosecutor-general and the appointment of the new one in order to debate this issue.

"We cannot examine this issue without such representations," he noted. The chairman called legislators' attention to the fact that the Federation Council regulations contain no article on how such issues should be examined.

The agenda of today's session contains such an item on the procedure of debating by the chamber issues relegated by the constitution to its competence. Deputies decided that the item should be examined to be ready to discuss the president's representations.

There were also proposals to consider the situation with Aleksey Kazannik's resignation, since the new constitution envisages that the prosecutor-general's appointments and resignations are to be approved by the Federation Council. As a result, this item on the agenda reads as follows: "On prosecutor-general".

Lawmakers also decided to hear a report by the Russian premier on non-payments and the government's programme on how to do away with them. The crisis of non-payments was discussed at parliamentary hearings on Monday where legislators recognised them as a very serious problem affecting the entire financial and budgetary system of the country.

Parliamentarians also decided to hear information from the Russian Foreign Ministry (in the section "Miscellaneous") on treaties which were concluded but not ratified. The proposal was prompted by a question of whether the Russian-Georgian treaty which has not been ratified by the lower chamber for the time being, operates or not.

Legislators continue discussing the agenda.

'Misunderstanding' in Duma Over Yeltsin Message

PM1403160794 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 12 Mar 94 p 1

[Vladimir Yermolin report: "Duma Ponders President's Message"]

[Text] After a short vacation the State Duma began discussing the Russian president's message "On Strengthening the Russian State" right away Friday.

In a rounded and well-composed report Ivan Rybkin, speaker of the lower chamber, voiced a largely positive opinion of the message and called for constructive work based on the president's proposals. He said that a number of points in the message "can and should be disputed," but there were obvious points with which he could not fail to agree. These included the reform of the Army or, to be more accurate, the deepening and completion of that reform.

The report was also couched in such a way as to not cause tremendous dispute either in the center or on the flanks. Misunderstanding arose only over why the president needed another memorandum of accord in society when the Duma has already adopted such a memorandum. Ivan Rybkin explained that in this case an extra initiative was not an obstacle but an "added bonus." But it was visible from the reaction in the hall that the question of whose memorandum is "more valid" is nonetheless exercising some people in the Duma. Paradoxically enough Russia may yet see a war of "peace initiatives." Evidently foreseeing that danger, Ivan Rybkin came up with a global idea for reconciliation. He proposed convening an All-Russia congress of all political forces.

The tone of conciliation and cooperation which Rybkin tried to set in his report seems to have gone unnoticed by many people.

The debate on the president's message is scheduled to fill a whole working day for the Duma.

Duma Deputy Chairman Welcomes Yeltsin Initiative

PM1403135594 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 12 Mar 94 p 1

[Commentary by Mikhail Mityukov, deputy chairman of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly State Duma, under the "Politics" rubric: "Accord on Civil Peace Is a Response to Society's Demand"]

[Text] I am certain that there are good prospects for the accord on civil peace which the president has suggested should be signed. It is hard to object to the actual idea—in principle, all parties, groups, and factions loudly declare that they advocate consolidation, cooperation, civil peace, and accord. The agreement proposes finding common points of contact and determining the principles on which the agreement will be based, the commitments that the government and other state organs will assume, and the commitments that parties, trade unions, and public organizations will take on themselves. To oppose this idea would be to oppose the opinion prevailing among the population that it is time to end confrontation, that peace and accord are needed. The agreement on civil peace should not just be a declaration. Having named the points of contact and common aims and tasks, the president should also propose both a mechanism for implementing the agreement and the sides' commitments and the specific political responsibility of those who sign the memorandum. An extensive circle of participants will be invited to sign, that is, representatives of at least 100 public organizations, political parties, trade unions, and religious faiths as well as the power structures—the president, the government, the Federal Assembly chambers, and the Constitutional Court. That is the intention. As a politician I believe that to oppose it, refusing to participate in the memorandum on accord, would be to demonstrate political ambitions which are far from the people's true interests.

Duma's Bunich Sees Reforms Back on Course

PM1403152594 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 11 Mar 94 First Edition pp 1,3

[Transcript of remarks by Pavel Bunich, deputy chairman of the State Duma Committee on Property, Privatization, and Economic Activity, carried under the "At the State Duma" rubric; date not given: "How To Reconcile the Irreconcilable"]

[Text] I think that sensible people should be a little reassured by the president's recent Message to the Federal Assembly and the subsequent enlarged session of the Council of Ministers. After the cabinet shake-up, the departure of several key figures from it, and a worryingly long pause by the premier the president and the cabinet head have made it clear that the course of reforms remains as before. The government does not intend to give in to pressure from sector lobbies which cause momentary embarrassment in the upper echelons or heed the advice of economic authorities fervently convinced that for the time being the market is not for us—that the road to the market is a long and winding one that lies in some other dimension altogether.

It is typical that both Yeltsin and Chernomyrdin recalled the program drafted last August, dismissing once again, as it were, the charges of unfocused, chaotic drift. If the program is a course (and it is), serious deviations really will not be seen, although modifications will have to be made to practice. Who could have planned, for example, for state orders not being paid for, for wages not paid out on time, or for those in the budget-financed sphere being so badly hurt. On the contrary, it was stressed that their incomes would grow almost in parallel with prices. It did not work out. It is now time to pay for past sins, and for virtually all of them at the same time. It has been stated that the government will in the very near future settle its accounts with the countryside, the defense sector, the miners, and the budget-financed sphere. Major credits have been promised on the surety of the spring sowing. Compensation for the population's savings will continue to be paid. All this will, of course, whip up inflation, but the new cabinet cannot be blamed for that. The third act of the drama has come, and it is time to fire the gun hanging on the wall. We have been able to see for ourselves once again that you can have the very best of intentions but you will build nothing durable on the basis of unreliability and disregard of the law. If the government has decided finally to clear its debts, its determination can only be welcomed.

It is important not to overshoot the mark; it is important to keep a clear sense of proportion. Some people are asking that not just the budget debt but suppliers too be repaid. However, carrying out mutual settlement on the 1992 model means delivering a very heavy blow to the reforms. Others propose that working capital be indexed—that is to say, you add several zeros to their value and then quietly slip that gain into wages. This has happened. We have experienced it. It is senseless to repeat it. It is not difficult to predict that new subsidies and cheap loans will be demanded from the government. Enterprises' market muscles have just begun to develop, and we are again providing them with hot-house conditions wherein they have to compete against no one for anything and where the young musculature will grow flaccid within a couple of weeks through not being wanted. And all this under the slogan of combating the reduction in output, of trying not to give way. Give way, and you will not keep inflation down.

The 1994 draft budget is screwed down so tightly that you can hear the nuts squeaking. By tradition we do everything late. There are, it is true, nuances here. In the past we would simply fail to pay money to, say, the Army or the northern regions and then say: We will be making cutbacks. Such methods generated a wave of discontent—society and the economy cannot be treated that way. First you plan what you will cut, you agree this, you make arrangements, and you cut whatever it is; then you make your expenditure savings. It is clear from the draft budget what will be curtailed and slimmed down. But time passes, and it gets lost again. If all the cuts had been announced at least one quarter ago.... I fear that it will be necessary to pay more than planned. Inflation will be not 3-5 percent by the end of the year but much higher—given the payment of debts, prices will increase roughly fourfold, by my estimates. And that is at best, if the government avoids the aforementioned pitfalls toward which some people are stubbornly egging it on.

Unfortunately the session said little about overcoming the investment crisis. This topic was touched on to a certain extent by Basin, chairman of the State Committee on Issues of Construction and Architecture. Revaluing fixed capital, he reported, will increase deductions set aside for depreciation to 40 trillion rubles [R]. But the problem is that enterprises will shamelessly consume this money and use it for wages. Basin suggested that we introduce separate accounts for depreciation, as was done in the past. I do not think that is enough. Tax is not levied on depreciation as distinct from wages paid out of profit or prime costs, and strictness here is therefore justified. Let them return everything they have consumed to the depreciation fund and then pay a fine in addition. The pointer of economic interest will then shift in the direction we desire and enterprises will be forced to think about the future.

There is in general a strange prejudice abroad that no one will want to resort to investment under inflation conditions. Quite the reverse. They want to. They very much want to. It is precisely during inflation that investment is the best way to save money. Land and real estate are self-indexing, as it were. That the price confusion makes life difficult and that almost everything goes on wages is another issue. Last year only 15 out of 600 facilities under the state capital investment plan were commissioned. But what is significant here is that private and joint-stock enterprises, where one's own, non-state assets increase, have a totally different attitude to investment. One-third of them are modernizing, expanding, and making improvements—that is to say, are in some way participating in the investment process. And I am encouraged by the thought that by 1 July, when voucher privatization is completed, around 80 percent of state property will be joint stock or in private ownership. In other words, approximately 80 percent of enterprises will receive an investment incentive. There may be no money to start with, but there will be an incentive. And with time there will be money too.

Incidentally, privatized enterprises have the right to obtain money on the security of their own property. The law on surety has been adopted, but a number of normative acts are required if it is to work.

And why not consider investment concessions—credit for investment needs which will be granted against specific business plans on a case-by-case basis rather than for whole sectors, as is current practice? This is an active state policy which is not even to be seen in embryonic form.

I understand the difficult conditions in which the current budget has been drafted, and I am ready to resign myself philosophically to many things. Yet one feature does produce a sense of inner protest. Expenditure has determined the budget, and no weight has been placed on the other side of the scales, the revenue side, to counterbalance it. But, you know, you cannot go on like that forever, because by contracting expenditure you also cut back future revenue and reduce the tax base. Something has to grow, to ripen, and yield fruit, and this "something" must be identified by the state in good time and, if need be, supported. But it seems to me that we are reverting to discussion of investment policy.

Regional Affairs

Orenburg Left-Wing Forces Protest U.S.-Led Exercises

PM1503154194 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 15 Mar 94 p 2

[Correspondent Yuriy Nikiforenko report: "From Arabian Desert to Orenburg Steppes. Context of Joint Exercises"]

[Text] Orenburg City—Forty years ago nuclear weapons tests in the atmosphere were carried out at the Totskoye test site in Orenburg Oblast. Many of those who happened to be in the area of the dangerous experiment are suffering from the tests' effects to this day.

Totskoye test site was recently visited by Brigadier General Leonard Holder Jr., commander of the U.S. Army 3d Infantry Division. He was studying preparations for the tactical exercises scheduled for summer 1994 in the southern Urals in the same places where the atomic epoch left its tragic mark four decades ago.

Who is Holder? What constitutes a U.S. division? The U.S. general fought in Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Kuwait and has a master's degree in European history. He once taught at a military academy. He has written a number of books on tactics and the art of warfare.

The 3d Division, which Holder commands, is armed with the latest military equipment. It consists of over 18,000 people, 290 tanks, 600 armored fighting vehicles and armored personnel carriers, 220 artillery pieces including nine multiple rocket-launchers, and 127 helicopters, 44 of them attack helicopters. The division has a signals battalion as well as mass destruction weapons protection and military police companies.

It must be stressed that during Operation Desert Storm alone, which was notorious for its ferocity, the U.S division destroyed 105 enemy tanks and armored personnel carriers and captured over 800 soldiers. Currently 1,100 of the division's soldiers are in Kuwait or on the Turkish-Iraqi border. Holder is now apparently ready to pass on his combat experience of massacring an enemy to Russian soldiers, in particular the personnel of the 27th Russian Division at the Totskoye test site. Our division consists of 8,000 soldiers and is equipped with tanks, armored personnel carriers, self-propelled guns, mortars, and multiple rocket-launcher systems.

The public in the Orenburg and Volga regions, concerned by the unfolding events, are protesting strongly against the scheduled exercises. Exactly what kind of joint "peacekeeping" tasks can be being tackled here is a complete mystery. A number of sociopolitical organizations in Samara and Orenburg Oblasts have adopted a joint statement in which they strongly protest about the two divisions' "peacekeeping" combat operations. Especially as these exercises are extremely dangerous in a region saturated with the defense industry. This area is Russia's bread basket. Let us not forget that the Orenburg region is a border oblast neighboring Kazakhstan. The saber-rattling could alarm peoples with whom we have lived on good terms.

The statement was supported by the oblast organizations of the Russian Federation Communist Party, the Russian Communist Workers' Party, the Agrarian Party of Russia, the Socialist Party of the Working People, the "For Social Justice" voters' association, the Union of Officers, and veterans' and other organizations.

A large group of candidates for Orenburg Oblast's legislative assembly has protested.

The text of the document was handed over to Vladimir Nikolayevich Volkov, State Duma deputy from Orsk Electoral District No. 133 and member of the committee for defense questions, at a meeting with voters.

Yeltsin Meets Krasnodar Kray Head

LD1503111394 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0946 GMT 15 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent]

[Excerpt] Sochi, 15 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—Russian President Boris Yeltsin, who arrived in Sochi on Monday on a brief vacation, met with Nikolay Yegorov, head of Krasnodar Kray, the same day.

Nikolay Yegorov told an ITAR-TASS correspondent that the president showed that he is very well informed about business and political life in the Kuban. He enquired about the course of spring field work, and the provision of Russia's breadbasket with fuel, mineral fertilizers, and other material and technical resources on the eve of the new sowing campaign.

Nikolay Yegorov said that the president paid particular attention to discussing the problems of Krasnodar Kray as a territory on Russia's southern border. Issues of the migration of the population from CIS "trouble spots" were discussed. The president agreed with the proposal by the kray's leadership temporarily to introduce a visa regime on the territory of Krasnodar Kray while the acute situations in the Transcaucasus region continue. Nikolay Yegorov said that the Russian leadership will apparently adopt an appropriate document on this matter very soon.

The conversation lasted about five hours. [passage omitted]

Chernomyrdin Inspects Nizhniy Novgorod Farms

PM1403143194 Moscow SELSKAYA ZHIZN in Russian 12 Mar 94 p 1

[Report by Yuriy Shtatnov: "Viktor Chernomyrdin: 'A Major Undertaking For Russia'"]

[Text] Nizhniy Novgorod Oblast—Last November's land and property auctions at the "Pravdinskiy" sovkhoz in Nizhniy Novgorod Oblast were a kind of prologue to new approaches to agrarian reform at local level. It had been preceded by two years of evaluation, calculation, and observation of the life and work of country people both in remote parts and in the environs of the oblast center. This was done by Russian specialists in conjunction with experts from the International Finance Corporation. Its product was the Nizhniy Novgorod model of land reform.

What are its main features? The principles of voluntary participation by farms and peasants on the basis of their decision to privatize land and reorganize farms; freedom of choice, whereby farm members decide on their own sphere of activity; and priority farm members of farms, including pensioners, when it comes to the acquisition of property and land. And a strong legislative base as well.

Since the beginning of the year, land auctions have been held in other farms in the oblast; a total of six farms in different soil and climatic zones in the region were the pioneers. Nearly 40 kolkhozes, joint-stock companies, and sovkhozes are waiting in line, wanting to employ the new system.

It must be said that an active quest for agrarian reform options has been conducted of late in Tula, Moscow, and Orel Oblasts and in other regions of Russia. Which one will provide the foundation?

It is better to see once than to hear 100 times, as they say. No doubt this is what prompted V. Chernomyrdin, chairman of the Russian Federation government; A. Zaveryukha and A. Chubays, his deputies; V. Khlystun, minister of agriculture and food; and leading officials of a number of Russian ministries recently to spend a few days studying land reform on the spot, in Nizhniy Novgorod Oblast. The leaders of nearly 40 Russian oblasts, krays, and autonomous okrugs went to the oblast to size up the situation. The VIP's attended an auction, held this time at the Kolkhoz named for the 60th Anniversary of October, in Gorodetskiy Rayon.

The subsequent discussion involving the government head, the hosts, and the guests touched on the local land reform program that had been presented and ways of getting the Russian agroindustrial complex out of the current crisis. According to V. Chernomyrdin, who attended the auction and familiarized himself with the oblast's specific actions and plans, we are all participating in a "major undertaking in Russia," the main aim of which is to get owners to develop agricultural production.

Concerning the agrarian program created within the confines of the Nizhniy Novgorod region, the prime minister noted that it could become a national program, although it would have to be refined by the different regions. Viktor Stepanovich also backed the idea of creating a cadre center in Nizhniy Novgorod to train reform specialists.

During his stay in Nizhniy Novgorod Oblast, V. Chernomyrdin visited the "NITEL" joint-stock company and met with the leaders of industrial and defense enterprises and oblast administration chiefs.

A. Zaveryukha, deputy chairman of the Russian government, V. Khlystun, minister of agriculture, and representatives of the Finance Ministry and Land Reform Committee visited the Chernyshikhinskiy meat-packing plant that is being constructed in Kstovskiy Rayon and the "Rossiya" collective enterprise. The conference with the oblast's agroindustrial aktiv that followed discussed various agricultural production matters.

Ingush President Wants N. Ossetia Presidential Rule

LD1403205194 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1945 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] During the Monday closed parliamentary hearings at the Council of the Federation the President of Ingushetiya Ruslan Aushev called for the introduction of direct presidential rule in Prigorodny region of North Ossetia. After the hearings he told journalists that during the time of direct presidential rule talks should be held between the presidents of Ingushetiya and North Ossetia "till the situation becomes stable". Prigorodnyy region is a disputed territory between Ossetians and Ingushes.

"I am against the abolition of the state of emergency, but it should be restricted to the area where the conflict broke out", Aushev said.

The president of North Ossetia Akhsarbek Galazov also spoke favorably of the hearings and described them as another step to peace in the Northern Caucasus and stability in North Ossetia and Ingushetiya.

According to Galazov, territorial claims and the attempt to seize part of Prigorodnyy region by force were the initial cause of the Ossetian-Ingush tragedy. "The implementation of the decree of President Yeltsin on the return of refugees to their home places should begin with the first clause that declares Prigorodnyy region an integral part of North Ossetia", Galazov said.

He said that the Russian president, government and Federal Assembly face the task of ruling out "any territorial changes, and not only in the Northern Caucasus". The integrity of Russia can be preserved only in this way, Galazov thinks.

Galazov spoke for a comprehensive approach to the refugee problem. He called absolutely wrong the reduction of the matter to the return of Ingush refugees alone. He said that for three and a half years 47,500 refugees from former Soviet republics have been living in North Ossetia, among them Ossetians, Azeris, Armenians and Russians. Their number continues to grow.

In Galazov's opinion official talks between Vladikavkaz and Nazran which are now being prepared can begin at the end of March or beginning of April. He said the meeting could see the signing of a package of documents to settle the situation.

The North Ossetian president expressed his sharply negative attitude to the proposal to introduce direct presidential rule in Prigorodnyy region because "it will do no good". He spoke against "the use of force, whoever might use it."

Tatarstan Nationalists Attack Federal Elections

LD1403171394 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1406 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] An alliance of nationalist groups in Tatarstan in a letter to the Central Election Commission in Moscow on Monday have protested against yesterday's elections to the Federal Assembly in the republic. They described the vote as unconstitutional and as a gross violation of human rights and the Tatars' right to self-determination. "The election has brought the republic on the brink of civil war", it says.

Leaders of the umbrella organization including the Tatar Public Center, Ittifak Party and Azatlyk Youth Movement are challenging the voting results because of what they saw as a ban on opposition meetings and rallies in the election campaign. The letter speaks of a government-sponsored campaign of intimidation and threats of dismissals and non-payment of wages in urban areas and withdrawal of subsidies in the countryside.

They accused the government of imposing censorship of the mass media and barring representatives of the nationalist groups from monitoring the election.

The authors of the letter say they have appealed for international inquiry into the legitimacy of federal elections in Tatarstan and an anti-democratic environment in which they were held.

Low Yaroslavl Election Turnout Viewed

PM1503104194 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 12 Mar 94 First Edition p 2

[Report by correspondent Yuriy Vakhrin: "Choice Has Been Made But There Is Still No Agreement"]

[Text] Yaroslavl—The Yaroslavl people have formed a new legislative organ with an imposing name: the Yaroslavl Oblast State Duma. The elections were deemed valid in 17 out of 23 districts. That is, six deputies' seats will be empty for at least two months. But it is entirely possible they will be empty until the fall. The Duma deputies will now schedule the date of repeat elections.

No municipal organs of power were elected in the cities of Rostov and Rybinsk. The elections of the municipal committee in the oblast center were also almost disrupted: Here only 15 deputies' seats acquired incumbents and in seven districts the voters essentially refused to use their legal "right to vote."

The voters' level of activeness has been very low. Only 33 percent of people with the right to vote came to the polling stations. In two districts of Rybinsk and four of Yaroslavl, the number of those who went to the polls was lower than the control level of 25 percent.

In all 14 districts were formed on the territory of these large industrial centers. And in eight of them where elections were nonetheless valid a critical level of tension persisted until nearly the very last hour of work of the polling stations. Here the control level of voting activity was just exceeded.

The situation was saved by the inhabitants of the rural rayons. And not only because they are traditionally more responsive to appeals to take part in such campaigns. The inhabitants of villages and small towns were better informed about their candidates.

I personally, compelled by my job to read the entire local press from cover to cover and to listen to the local radio and watch oblast and city television programs, managed to learn the names of the contenders for a seat on the municipality only at the polling station, from the ballot slip itself.

It may be supposed that a substantial proportion of voters who wanted to vote did not want "improvisations" in front of the ballot box and preferred to stay home on Sunday. Others, although they did come, were unable to make a choice and marked the box "against all deputies."

Probably the Yaroslavl people's activity was influenced to some extent also by "political fatigue" and the general political situation in Russia recently. A serious analysis by specialists is needed here. Especially as the election situation in neighboring oblasts—Ivanovo and Kostroma Oblasts, where the voting is scheduled for the second half of March—is similar to the situation observed in Yaroslavl Oblast. There is the same growing decline in voters' interest in the elections, the same lack of information about the candidates. And—particularly important—the same old idea of the new organs of power.

At any rate, the majority of Yaroslavl people have obviously elected another soviet but not a legislative chamber of a fully empowered component of the Russian Federation. During a poll over 70 percent of respondents, for instance, unequivocally expressed themselves in favor of the idea that the new oblast Duma should work on the basis of voters' instructions.

At a press conference devoted to the results of the elections, Yaroslavl Oblast Governor Anatoliy Lisitsin frankly stated that their results could have been utterly different had it not been for the constant attacks of Vladimir Varukhin, the president's representative in the oblast, who sought to disrupt the elections. "During meetings with inhabitants I was often asked: Why go to the elections if the president's representative states that the elections will be repealed, that they will be moved to the fall. That of course affected people's mood and introduced confusion.... The voters' activeness could have been far higher had it not been for the negative role of the president's representative."

It is sad, but each disputing side has some truth. This became possible in the absence of precise, clear legislation on elections to the oblast legislative organs of power and self-management. The statute on elections in the oblast was reworked three times. For instance, the governor initially confirmed this statute io the basis of the "Penza option" guaranteeing representation in the Duma for each administrative formation irrespective of the number of inhabitants.

Defending it, he appealed to the Constitution, which gives components of the Federation the right to determine the election procedure independently. Threatening a court investigation, the president's representative achieved a change to this statute on the elections but in the name of safeguarding citizens' constitutional guarantees to equal electoral rights.

As a result the districts had to be re-formed in such a way that they contained an equal number of voters. This reorganization alone added to the confusion and disoriented both candidates and voters.

One side, for instance, suggested that the elections be deferred. The other would not agree to this for anything. The local "red directors" recently "clashed" strongly with the governor. They used threats and ultimatums to force him to lower local taxes, established by the previous oblast soviet. Nothing can now patch up this breach in the budget. That is why the governor categorically refused to remain any longer without his legislator partner, without his protection and support.

The president's administration tried to reconcile the quarrelling sides and to reason with them. N. Medvedev, leader of the administration's department for work with the territories, traveled to Yaroslavl. In vain. Three days before the elections, when everything was already prepared for the voting, the president's representative suddenly sent a representation to the governor (and published it in the press at the same time) suggesting that the elections to the local organs of power be cancelled.

The elections nonetheless took place. But the last Sunday in February brought no conciliation. The situation now is taking shape in such a way that a succession of court cases on recognizing the elections to the municipalities as invalid may now ensue in the oblast.

Lipetsk Voters 'Boycotted' Oblast Elections

PM1503090194 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 12 Mar 94 First Edition p 2

[Correspondent Viktor Metchikov report under "Regional Elections" rubric: "Lipetsk Boycotts Elections"]

[Text] Lipetsk—A total of only 19 deputies in 38 districts were elected to Lipetsk Oblast Deputies' Assembly in the elections held last Sunday [13 March]. Although the elections have been officially declared valid because the statute on this organ of representative power adopted by the oblast soviet enables it to start work with any quorum, the assembly's viability with only half its members seems extremely doubtful.

Even in rural districts the voter turnout has sharply decreased. As regards the city, it can be said that Lipetsk boycotted the elections en masse. Because of the low turnout of city inhabitants at polling stations (between 11 and 24 percent), they were not valid in a single one of the oblast center's districts. Not a single deputy was elected to the city organ of representative power.

Poll Publication Banned Before Krasnoyarsk Voting

PM1503114394 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 15 Mar 94 p 2

[Report by Aleksey Tarasov: "Leaders with Access to Secrets"]

[Text] Krasnoyarsk—Since the soviets of people's deputies have departed this life, the kray administration has been interested in lawmaking in Krasnoyarsk. But despite the passion with which officials have given themselves over to this task, they have not crowned themselves with laurels. The statute on elections to the kray legislative assembly scheduled for 27 March forbids the publication in the 10 days prior to the voting of the results of public opinion polls connected with the forthcoming elections.

We recall that this ban was in operation on the eve of the 12 December all-Russian parliamentary elections but led to nothing good. And now it is happening again.

Why the kray administration needed this is in general understandable: By receiving punctually sociological information which is closed to the press it will receive an opportunity to control the course of the election campaign where the rest of the public is assigned the role of extras. Officials will find it easier to make operational conclusions and to manipulate public consciousness.

The kray referendum is scheduled for 27 March: The population is to express its attitude toward the local law "on the foundations of direct power of the people and the organization of state power in Krasnoyarsk Kray." The interpretation of the power of the people and of democracy in this document gives rise to a mass of questions.

But let us return to the elections ceremony. Seven days before them the governor has also banned "the dissemination of materials detrimental to the honor and dignity of candidate deputies." What, in the remaining days—before and after—is it possible to cause harm? And what about the honor and dignity of other citizens who are not contenders for seats?

The local administration separately approved inter alia a statute on the procedure for the use of the mass media by candidate deputies which includes the following point for one: "Journalists, creative workers, and officials who commit violations may at the suggestion of the relevant electoral commission be removed for the period through the end of the election campaign from work connected with its coverage by the leaders of the mass media.... The electoral commission, in cases where mass media editorial offices violate the procedure for conducting election campaigning more than once, have the right to raise the question of the dismissal of leaders of mass media editorial offices...."

Under the law "on the mass media" this is called interference in the activity of editorial offices and violation of their professional independence (and the 10-day moratorium on the publication of sociological reports is forcing the journalists to renounce the dissemination of information).

It seems there is one thing left for the local press: not to fulfill illegal bans. Incidentally, KRASNOYARSKIY KOMSOMOLETS had the day before, 12 December, familiarized its readers with the data of sociological polls so the outcome of the elections was no sensation for them.

Incidentally, KRASNOYARSKIY KOMSOMOLETS because of financial difficulties was recently obliged to take on as a co-founder the kray administration's press and information department. But the new owner does not even have enough money for those who do not contradict it.

So far no demonstration against the restriction of freedom of speech in Krasnoyarsk has been observed. On the other hand, the triumphal procession of bureaucrats is continuing to talk of the establishment of a civil society and the separation of powers.

International Affairs

Kravchuk Previews Meeting With Nixon

LD1403224894 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian 1900 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] [Announcer] A meeting between Ukraine's President Leonid Kravchuk and former U.S. President Richard Nixon is to take place soon. What does Leonid Kravchuk himself expect from this meeting? Volodymyr Tatarenko asked him to answer this question:

[Begin recording] [Kravchuk] The principal goal of the meeting is to involve private capital in Ukraine. We are setting such a goal while discussing this issue in the United States because we know that, and it seems to me that I had already said this at the news conference: No matter what credits are granted to us, unless private capital is invested in Ukraine, because it makes the bulk of the capital...[pauses] By the way, do you know how much the United States invests in foreign countries annually? Four hundred and fifty billion dollars. Can you imagine this? Half a trillion dollars are invested. But it is not the state that invests, but private firms. These are the Morgan, General Motors, Pepsi Cola, Johnson and Johnson, and so on and so forth. They have capital and they invest it. So, to involve them we here have to act relevantly adequately. That is to say, conditions, protection of [investments], and a market itself must be created. However, there should be promotion.

Therefore, the main goal of my meeting with vice president [title as heard] Mr. Nixon is to agree on how to involve private capital in Ukraine. This is the main thing. And to exchange opinions on the political situation. He has relevant instructions from relevant circles in the United States and he wants to draw his own conclusions proceeding from his own observations.

[Unidentified correspondent] And what if he meets the opposition leaders?

[Kravchuk] He is welcome to do this. I will not object to this. I will even propose this to him. Let him listen to the opposition leaders. I would only want him to ask them to show him their programs. Not just words, but programs. Because, there are quite a few amateurs whose hobby is to talk a lot. If he considers their programs and they are better and more effective, believe me, we will glorify our dear opposition. [end recording]

Russia's Dubinin on Black Sea Fleet Inventory

LD1503112494 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 2100 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] Moscow-Kiev—Speaking to a UNIAN correspondent today, Russia's Ambassador-at-Large Yuriy Dubinin, who is heading the Russian state delegation at the negotiations on the Black Sea Fleet, refuted a Radio Liberty report which quoted him as saying that Russia has no intention of taking an inventory of the Black Sea Fleet, as well as a report by the same radio station on "Ukraine's reluctance to abide by last year's Massandra accords." Yuriy Dubinin refused to give his opinion on the fleet's inventory insisted on by the Ukrainian side but stressed that the issue is within the competence of the Ukrainian and Russian delegations. "Any attempts to turn the Black Sea Fleet negotiations into a shoot-out by unilateral and public statements will have little effect," he said. "Undoubtedly, [Ukrainian President] Leonid Kravchuk's proposals on the fleet will be discussed. The final date for a meeting between the Russian and Ukrainian delegations has not yet been set."

Speaking on the Black Sea Fleet issue, Ukraine's former defense minister, Kostyantyn Morozov, told UNIAN today that the sides must first fulfill their previous obligations. "The fleet must be divided by 1995, and its non-Ukrainian part must leave the territory of Ukraine, in which Russia can count on our assistance," Kostyantyn Morozov stressed. "I am convinced it would be unreasonable to drag this problem into the next century." He also emphasized the lack of grounds behind Moscow's allegations that Ukraine is not abiding by the Massandra accords. "We don't know any such accords. The Russian side means the verbal agreements between Presidents Leonid Kravchuk and Boris Yeltsin which are not accords as such but merely a reflection of their common view on the negotiation process." The main premise in this process, the former minister believes, should be Ukraine's legislation and security.

Fourth Round of Talks With European Union Begins

WS1503100194 Kiev Ukrayinske Radio First Program Network in Ukrainian 0600 GMT 15 Mar 94

[Text] The fourth round of negotiations between Ukraine and the European Union [EU] on concluding a treaty on partnership and cooperation began yesterday at the EU headquarters. Assessing the first day of the talks, Ukrainian Deputy Foreign Minister Oleksandr Makarenko, head of the Ukrainian delegation, noted that they were held in an atmosphere of constructiveness and mutual understanding. If the negotiations conclude with the results expected by both sides, Ukraine will be the first CIS state to conclude such a treaty with the EU.

Vietnam, Ukraine Sign 5-Year Cooperation Agreement

LD1303172794 Kiev UNIAR in Ukrainian 2200 GMT 12 Mar 94

[Text] Kiev, 12 Mar—Negotiations have ended between the government delegations of Ukraine and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. The negotiations resulted in the signing of an agreement on bilateral cooperation for a period of five years, particularly in machine-building and personnel training.

National Affairs

Kravchuk on Economic Restructuring

WS1403181494 Kiev Ukrayinske Radio First Program Network in Ukrainian 1500 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Excerpt] As we have already reported, a session of the Ukrainian Cabinet of Ministers began today. During a recess, President Leonid Kravchuk and government members toured the Kremenchug Association for Production of Trucks. Having viewed the models on display—which included heavy tractors, new models of small and medium-sized cars, and microbuses—Leonid Kravchuk answered questions from Ukrainian journalists:

[Begin recording] [Unidentified reporter] These trucks represent a technological priority for Ukraine. Is there any hope that we will drive this beautiful vehicle into the European market?

[Kravchuk] There are a lot of economic problems right now. There are still a lot of cry babies in Ukraine. However, there are people who, in difficult conditions—I do not want to say that it is easy for them—find ways to resolve such problems, which could not be found even in the time that is now being regretted by many. Here we have been shown model cars. If one wants, one will find ways to resolve the most difficult problems at the most difficult times. If one does not want, one will nod at somebody else. One can nod at the government, the president, a manager, and the administration—there are many to nod at. However, this will not advance matters. Therefore, we are discussing a very important question at the Cabinet of Ministers today—a program for restructuring industry. Without this, there will be no market, no development of our industry. We are to determine our goals, and what we have to help attain these goals—resources, people, technologies, raw materials, etc., etc. If we implement this restructuring according to market principles or some other... [Kravchuk pauses] Today, it is clearly determined that this should be only the market. Of course, there should be state control over the transition to [passage indistinct].

Market mechanisms work for everyone. A plant, its manager, and its administration work under market conditions; find contracts with foreign and domestic firms; work for Ukraine, for the realization of production both in Ukraine and abroad. I just want... [pauses] We have just seen, and invited you so that you can say to the people: Good people, stop crying and look for ways out of these problems. True, these problems are not the same in every branch; they are different. However, there are different ways of resolving them. We appeal; we simply believe that there is no other path for Ukraine—one must look for ways out of our problems. [passage omitted]

Cabinet Assesses Reorganization

LD1503003494 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian 2000 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] A news conference on the results of the Cabinet of Ministers sitting, chaired by Ukraine's President Leonid Kravchuk, was held on 14 March in Kiev. As was pointed out at the meeting with journalists, the consideration of the draft program of structural reorganization of Ukraine's economy was [word indistinct] at the sitting. Deputy Minister of Economy Leonid Minin stressed at the news conference that this document received, in general, a positive assessment at the sitting. It will be submitted for the consideration of the Supreme Council. It is a conceptual basis for Ukraine's transition toward market principles of economic management with social orientation and its integration into the world system of labor distribution with regard to the specific nature of our state's economic development. The draft envisages the urgent overcoming of emission and hyperinflation and measures to accelerate the privatization processes.

Also, a report by President Leonid Kravchuk on the results of the official visit by Ukraine's state delegation to Washington was heard at the sitting. Judging from the agreements achieved there, they managed to bring Ukrainian-American relations to a qualitatively new level. In particular, a large-scale program of economic and other cooperation between the two countries was mapped out. First and foremost, this is manifested in the fact that the United States is ready to grant 2.5 million dollars in aid for the implementation of about 70 specific projects.

Kravchuk: Crimean Leader's Decree Not Legally Binding

LD1403185494 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1653 GMT 14 Mar 94

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature No. 49; compiled by Nikolay Zherebtsov, Andrey Petrovskiy, edited by Vladimir Shishlin]

[Text] President Leonid Kravchuk says that last Thursday's decree by Crimean leader Yuriy Meshkov to hold a poll on relations with Kiev "will not be legally binding regardless of the balance of forces."

For his part, Crimean Parliamentary Chairman Nikolay Bagrov defeated by Meshkov in presidential elections in January, in a speech in Sevastopol said that on a number of points the new president's first decrees were out of line both with Ukrainian and Crimean legislation. INTERFAX Note: Crimean deputies have not accepted Bagrov's resignation as parliamentary leader that he tendered after a crushing defeat in the presidential elections.

Bagrov said the Crimean president's decree sacking the cabinet *included a number of officials who were not* cabinet members, among them—heads of the Ukrainian security services for the territory and of "Crimea" TV company.

Bagrov said it was not sensible to try to make 1994 a year of continued elections, pointing to a parliamentary resolution saying it was pointless to call local elections in Crimea on June 26 timed to coincide with a similar vote in Ukraine. Bagrov called for local elections to be held later in the year instead of this summer at the height of a harvesting and holiday season.

He praised the parliament's performance over the past four years saying "Crimean statehood was the main achievement" over the period.

However, Bagrov believes that on the negative side, the parliament has failed to set in motion a mechanism for an "open economy" in the territory.

But local observers think this is something that Russian economist Yevgeniy Saburov, appointed as vice premier last Friday, will be able to make progress in. Many point to the fact that Saburov's first steps as virtual head of government are clearly intended to ease tension in relations with Kiev. INTERFAX Note: Shortly after his appointment, Saburov appealed to the Ukrainian president to be granted Ukrainian citizenship. And at a news conference later, he spoke of wanting "to nudge Meshkov towards rapprochement with Kiev." Saburov said Crimea would maintain very close ties with Ukraine. He praised the professional skills of Ukrainian economics and finance ministers Roman Shpek and Grigoriy Pyatachenko describing them as "highly pragmatic."

At the same time, Saburov said the core of his cabinet would be made up of leading economists, to be invited from Russia, and whom he described as "highly competent professionals."

Chornovil Seeks Rukh Approval for Candidacy

LD1503002794 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 2100 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] Kiev—As RUKH-PRESS reported on 14 March, NRU [People's Movement of Ukraine, Rukh] Chairman Vyacheslav Chornovil declared his readiness to stand for Ukraine's president in the June 1994 election if Rukh approves such a decision. According to him, "the program of Rukh, supported by the people, can become a program of transformations in Ukraine." The final decision on the participation of Vyacheslav Chornovil in the election will be approved at the second stage of the 5th all-Ukrainian Assembly of Rukh due to begin on 16 April.

Nationalist Leader Calls For Dictatorship

AU1503113594 Lvov ZA VILNU UKRAYINU in Ukrainian 3 Mar 94 p 2

[Statement by Roman Koval, chairman of the national association "Ukraine's State Independence," and deputy editor of the newspaper NEZBORYMA NATSIYA (An Invincible Nation): "National Dictatorship Alone Will Extricate Us From Chaos"]

[Text] In the election campaign in Lvov Oblast, the national association "Ukraine's State Independence" [DSU] is represented by three candidates: Anatoliy Shcherbatyuk [presently under arrest for stirring up interethnic hostility], Myron Levytskyy, and Roman Koval. In Ukraine, mainly in its eastern [as published] regions, 23 DSU members are standing to be deputies.

The DSU's election program is expounded by its chairman Roman Koval, deputy editor of NEZBORYMA NATSIYA and author of the books "Is Appeasement Between Ukraine and Russia Possible?," "With Whom and Against Whom?," and "On Enemies, Allies, and Fellow-Travelers."

The DSU is in favor of immediately suspending the uncontrolled export of foodstuffs and basic commodities to Russia, Israel, and Poland. By closing Ukrainian borders, we will also arrest the filthy tide of Russian and Western pseudoculture (pornography, occultism, sectarianism, psychic shamanism, and drug addiction), as well as migration from Russia, Caucasus, and Third-World countries.

We are against the demo-communist Kravchuk-Zvyahilskyy clique, which has plundered Ukraine, imposed Western prices, given the green light to speculators, profiteers, and corruptionists, and sharply reduced social programs.

We do not trust the so-called democratic opposition, which humbly fulfills the instructions of the West. Nor do we trust the communists, who have always looked toward Moscow—the capital of the Russian evil empire.

The DSU supports a decisive offensive, involving the army, against the mafia and it endorses the nationalization of property accumulated by it.

We find it necessary to introduce a state monopoly on external trade and major transactions involving hard currency.

We advocate the return to state price regulation and expropriation of the non-Ukrainian bourgeoisie, which got rich through violating the law and exploiting Ukrainians.

Land, factories, and other large enterprises must become state property.

The DSU is against the privatization of Ukraine by aliens. For this, it is necessary to adopt a new law on citizenship that would guarantee Ukrainians the right to be masters on their own land. In accordance with the current law on citizenship, the following categories of people have the right to elect and to be elected to the Supreme Council:

—veterans of the anti-Ukrainian struggle, former NKVD [People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs], KGB, GRU [Main Intelligence Directorate], and Ministry of Internal Affairs officials who were involved in repressions against the Ukrainian people;

—millions of Russians who were brought in to ultimately enslave Ukraine;

—separatists of various nationalities;

—criminal mafiosi who are undermining Ukraine's economy.

As one can see, the present law on citizenship fixes the domination in Ukraine of aliens—Charodyeyevs, Meshcheryakovs, Zvyahilskyys, Hurvitses, and Dvorkises [officials of Russian and allegedly Jewish origin]....

Thus, the DSU is in favor of adopting a new law on citizenship, a law that will guarantee the right to vote exclusively to those citizens who are loyal to the Ukrainian state.

In order to enable us to survive as a nation, preference in our state must be given to all things Ukrainian: Ukrainians must be given employment on a priority basis, their social provision must be promoted, and they must be given cheap housing and privatization rights. In making personnel cuts, Ukrainians must be the last on the redundancies list.

Peasants will receive land for permanent use with the right for their children to inherit it, but without the right to sell it. The peasant himself will choose the form of economic management, but not the political line. Ukrainian peasants will be given every possible assistance.

It is necessary to increase expenditure on ensuring a proper standard of living for officers of the law-enforcement bodies, Ukraine's Security Service, and servicemen, and to stop the conversion of the military-industrial complex and unilateral disarmament.

We are against democratic chaos and communist practices and for a strong national administration and a mighty Ukrainian Army, equipped with nuclear weapons.

The members of the DSU will stand for the Supreme Council exclusively for the purpose of promoting the Ukrainian national idea—we do not believe that the Ukrainian state can be built through voting. Moreover, we believe that elections are a wasteful and harmful affair: While we are preparing to vote, Russia is preparing war against us for the Crimea and then for the whole of Ukraine.

It is only a strong Ukrainian military power that can stop the Kremlin's adventurers.

The preconditions exist for introducing military dictatorship: These are chaos, the unpunished growth of separatism, the factual departure of the Crimea, Donetsk, and Luhansk oblasts from Kiev's jurisdiction, and the escalation of crime.

The Ukrainian military will come to power by methods that are traditional in world history. They will be the ones who will, within a short period of time, close the borders that will delineate our state.

Precisely the military will subdue the administrations of the Crimea and Donbass, which are rapidly moving away from Kiev.

Precisely they, through the mass media that they will censor, will shape public opinion, which will approve the decisive establishment of order in Ukraine.

The so-called democratization will be curtailed. A transitional period will be announced, during which the "Ukrainian SSR Constitution" will not be effective.

A moratorium will be introduced on elections, referendums, and plebiscites.

Those parties and other organizations that are financed from abroad will be disbanded.

Anti-Ukrainian publications will be closed down.

Rallies and picketing will be temporarily banned.

Newsprint will be nationalized. Private printing houses and duplicating equipment will be confiscated by the state.

An emergency situation in the economy will be declared.

Speculation, pornography, and prostitution will not be tolerated. Homosexuals, prostitutes, pimps, and people with no fixed abode will be isolated.

A psychological campaign will be waged against enemies of the Ukrainian people through the mass media. Those who continue their antistate activity will be isolated and those showing disloyalty will be deported. The necessary effect will be created through disbanding anti-Ukrainian formations and holding several blitz trials of separatists with harsh verdicts.

There is no alternative—national dictatorship alone will extricate Ukraine from chaos and will lead it toward achieving statehood.

We believe in the revival of the Ukrainian people. We are looking forward to it. We are bringing it closer. Upheavals will inevitably occur—we are at a historical turning point.

Belarus

Supreme Soviet Passes New Constitution

LD1503132794 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1154 GMT 15 Mar 94

[By Belinform correspondent for TASS]

[Text] Minsk March 15 TASS—The Belarusian Supreme Soviet legislature passed on Tuesday a new constitution.

Under the new constitution, Belarus is to become a presidential republic. It is declared "a unitary democratic social law-governed state", with man regarded as the highest value of society and the state.

Belarus sets the goal of becoming a nuclear-free and neutral power.

The republic's president will also be the head of the executive branch. The parliament is to be reduced to 260 deputies from the present 360 lawmakers. It will remain semi-professional, that is part of deputies will work full-time in the parliament's standing commissions, while the rest will combine their deputy's posts with some other jobs.

The parliament ruled that presidential elections should be called before this July, while elections to a new parliament are to be held not later than this year.

The new fundamental law of the Republic of Belarus is to come into force from the date of its publication.

Monetary Union Probable by End of Mar

WS1403191994 Minsk BELAPAN in Belarusian 1758 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] BELAPAN was told by Uladzimir Zamyatalin, press secretary to Belarusian Prime Minister Kebich, that expert consultations and preparations concerning documents on the unification of the Belarusian and Russian monetary systems have been completed. By now, these documents are in the hands of the Russian prime minister, who is going to discuss them with a number of political factions in the State Duma of the Russian Federation. U. Zamyatalin said that, according to preliminary information, the majority of Duma deputies view the signing of the monetary union agreement between the two states with optimism. "Some disagreements over approaches to the creation of a single ruble zone are of more political, than economic character; they are artificially created by those experts who have been programmed to prevent, at any price, the establishment of a union of the two countries," said Kebich's press secretary. Speaking about the actual date of the monetary unification, Zamyatalin expressed hope that "it will most likely take place before the end of March."

Movement Appeals for Restoration of USSR

WS1403153694 Minsk RID in Russian 1402 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] The People's Movement of Belarus Coordinative Committee [KKNDB] has appealed to political parties, organizations, and all people of good will, "to whom the fate of nations is precious," to proclaim 17 March 1994 as a day of united action aimed at restoring the USSR.

According to the authors of the "Appeal to Nations of the Former USSR," which RID has recently received, this day should mark the beginning of activities aimed at a voluntary restoration of the USSR. Over the last three years since the 17 March 1991 referendum, reads the document, people have realized "that they have been sold for the benefit of international capital and interests of the United States; deprived of the united motherland, friendship, peace, and accord; and thrown into the abyss of war, lawlessness, and spiritual and material impoverishment, and that the country has been reduced to a zone of cheap labor, raw materials, and 'dirty' production, as well as a dumping ground for industrial waste."

The KKNDB believes that at rallies, meetings, and pickets on 17 March, people should categorically voice demands to fulfill their will, which was expressed three years ago and ignored by "the democrats and national-extremists" who came to power.

Presidential Election Draft Law Elaborated

WS1403121294 Minsk BELAPAN in Belarusian 0900 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] BELAPAN has learned that the legislative commission for state building has elaborated a draft law on presidential elections in the Republic of Belarus. According to the document, the presidential election will be held based on the general, equal, and direct electoral law in the form of a secret ballot. If this provision is approved by the Supreme Soviet, the election will be closed to citizens found incapable by a court decision as well as citizens who are incarcerated or held in custody. The draft also says that only Belarusian citizens over 35 years of age are eligible to vote, and only those who have lived in the Republic for at least 10 years can be elected. The president's term of office would last five years. At the same time, the same person cannot be elected for more than two terms.

According to the document, candidacies for the Belarusian president will be put forward by at least 70 legislative deputies as well as by Belarusian citizens, who must collect at least 100,000 signatures of the electors. All expenses connected with the organization of the election are covered by the state budget. The commission for state building suggested that the submission of presidential candidates should start in 75 days. The Central Electoral Commission has to register an initiative group in charge of collecting signatures for presidential candidates within five days. Lists of the signatures are to be submitted to rayon, city, or city district electoral commissions at least 55 days before the election. So, simple calculation shows that the legislative commission considers two weeks or so a sufficient time for collecting 100,000 signatures from citizens.

Expert Views Defense Industry Conversion

WS1503120194 Minsk VO SLAVU RODINY in Russian 12 Mar 94 p 2

[Interview with Yu. Kosolapov, an expert of the Belarusian Cabinet of Ministers Department for Coordinating Activities of Administrative Bodies, by A. Bezveselnyy; place and date not given: "Modern Ostap Benders"]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] **[Bezveselnyy] You have mentioned an important problem such as the destruction and recycling of weapons and military equipment. How will Belarus benefit from the successful resolution of this problem?**

[Kosolapov] As a matter of fact, some of these weapons pose a threat to the people and environment. Despite a limited budget, the Defense Ministry has managed to find possibilities for financing appropriate scientific-research and experimental-design works in the interest of the Belarusian Armed Forces. The first results of this work can now be summarized.

According to specialists' estimates, the implementation of the project for recycling rocket fuel Melanzh alone will make it possible to develop a competitive technology, profit more than 1 billion Russian rubles, and resolve a whole range of ecological and other problems.

At the 43d Defense Ministry repair-mechanical plant near Dobrush, recycling of weapons useless for combat is being launched. It is expected that more than 50,000 pieces of dangerous weapons will be reprocessed by 1997, which will significantly contribute to resolving the issues of environmental security and the problems of explosive materials in the republic, as well as turning a considerable profit.

There is another very interesting example. At Belarusian aircraft-repair plants and other aviation industry facilities, active work is currently being conducted to develop the aircraft Belarus in cooperation with Russia and Kazakhstan. Additionally, this is accompanied by considerable activity in international cooperation regarding conversion. This, however, is a topic for another conversation.

[Bezveselnyy] **Yuriy Georgiyevich, apparently, the situation with the conversion is not so bad, despite certain skeptics' complaints.**

[Kosolapov] Exactly. Officials from the Defense Ministry and the Cabinet of Ministers understand very well that there are many political, socioeconomic, and scientific problems hampering the conversion of military facilities. Many of these problems are of an interdepartmental nature. Therefore, the Cabinet of Ministers believes that it is necessary to develop new organizational forms and methods to improve this process, and to implement the government conversion program more efficiently.

Talks Held With U.S. Team on Disarmament

WS1403194394 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 1815 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] A meeting of Belarusian and U.S. officials at the Defense Ministry level began in Minsk today. Delegations from the two countries will discuss a number of acute problems facing Belarus. These problems, first of all, concern difficulties Belarus is encountering in dismantling military equipment and the need to reclaim and return land that was cleared following reductions in our own troops and the withdrawal of foreign ones. According to our information, the U.S. delegation has come to Minsk with a package of proposals which can be used to adopt measures aimed at resolving the abovementioned problems. The results of the meeting will be made known in a week's time.

Economic, Trade Agreements Signed With Britain

WS1403135494 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 1300 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] A Belarusian official delegation has concluded its visit to London. The main purpose of the visit was to sign intergovernment agreements on economic cooperation and the encouragement and protection of investments. Chairman of the Belarusian Foreign Trade Committee Radkevich and Minister of Trade and Industry Heseltine signed the documents on behalf of the Belarusian and British Governments, respectively. The Belarusian delegation members visited the Trade and Industry Department and met with representatives of British major banks and companies that came up with a range of cooperation initiatives.

Kazakhstan

'Big Fire' at Baykonur; Next Launch Unaffected

LD1503071794 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0650 GMT 15 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladimir Akimov]

[Text] Almaty, 15 Mar—A big fire has occurred at Baykonur cosmodrome. It started in the annex to one of the assembly and testing complexes and then spread to the headquarters of the military unit serving it. This is reported by the republic's press today, quoting news sources.

The preliminary damage amounts to some 3 billion rubles. Of the technological equipment only the telemetric apparatus suffered. At the cosmodrome there is another complex—a back-up one. Experts state that the fire which occurred will not affect the execution of the space program. So the launch of the next "Progress" cargo spacecraft planned for 18 March will not be postponed.

'Progress' Launch Not Delayed

LD1503084894 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0730 GMT 15 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladimir Akimov]

[Text] Almaty March 15 TASS—Local press in Kazakhstan has reported that a strong fire damaged one of the assembly and testing installations and headquarters of a military unit which serviced the installation in Baykonur, the former Soviet Union's main launching site, now contested by Russia and Kazakhstan.

According to informed sources, the preliminary damages amount to three billion roubles. Fortunately only telemetric devices were damaged apart from the buildings. All other technological equipment is intact.

The cosmodrome has a back-up set of equipment, and although the lift-off of the space ferry Progress, scheduled for March 18, will not be put off, specialists say that the fire will not delay the space programme.

Fire Blamed on Negligence

LD1503115994 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0943 GMT 15 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Anna Bakina, Vladimir Akimov]

[Text] Moscow/Almaty, 15 Mar— In the view of experts, the fire at the Baykonur cosmodrome, which occurred on the morning of 7 March, will have no effect on the cosmodrome's normal work, let alone on the forthcoming launch of the next "Progress" cargo spacecraft on 18 March. The fire engulfed an extension to the second assembly and testing block (MIK-2). The fire gutted five rooms where, in addition to everyday appliances, special equipment was housed. Fortunately, the cosmodrome has replacement equipment.

An ITAR-TASS correspondent learned from the press center of the Military Space Forces that the fire could have been caused by a faulty electrical appliance or carelessness with fire. In general, staff negligence was to blame.

The fire is not the only sorry event at the cosmodrome recently. A little earlier, an officers' garrison building burned down here. This kind of incident seems to becoming usual at Baykonur. However, extinguishing fires has to be done under extreme conditions: there is an acute water shortage at the complex. Added to that, the approach routes, both road and rail, become blocked by snow which often prevents even lorries carrying food from getting through to the cosmodrome.

However, the situation has another side as well. Replying to a question from an ITAR-TASS correspondent, it was stated at the press centre of the Military Space Forces that it is now simply unprofitable to deliver new vehicles and equipment to Baykonur because, under the present circumstances, everything that comes on to the territory of Kazakhstan automatically becomes the property of that state. The signing of the relevant treaty on the status and future of the cosmodrome is being dragged out because of disagreements between Kazakhstan and Russia over leasing period and the size of rental payments.

Nazarbayev Ratifies Agreement With Uzbekistan

LD1403182394 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1709 GMT 14 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Gennadiy Kulagin]

[Text] Almaty March 14 TASS—In keeping with the law "on temporary delegation of additional powers to the president of the Republic of Kazakhstan and heads of local administrations" Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev signed a decree on Monday to ratify the agreement establishing a common economic space between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan which was concluded in Tashkent in January 1994.

Both countries have abolished customs check points to encourage free movement of goods across the border. As a result, the prices of food in local market places in the Kazakh town of Shymkent located close to the Uzbek capital are lower than those in state-run shops. Enterprises of the two republics are also boosting direct ties.

Tajikistan

Islamic Movement Member Interviewed

NC1103200294 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 8 Mar 94 p 15

[Interview with 'Abdollah Nuri, member of Tajikistan's Islamic movement, with an unidentified JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI correspondent; place and date not given]

[Excerpts] [JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Please give us a brief biography and speak about your Islamic activities.

[Nuri] In the name of God, the almighty and merciful. I am 'Abdollah Nuri and am 46 years old. I was born in Tajikistan's mountainous region during the communist rule and at the peak of atheistic and communist propaganda. [passage omitted]

Since my father was acquainted with Islam, he started to teach religion to his children. At that time, the KGB put pressure on the Muslims. But despite all these pressures, we learned Islamic teachings and ideology from our father. I continued my studies in Dushanbe with a learned scholar, Qari Mohammad Jan, who had been in Afghanistan and India. [passage omitted]

In 1971, I was officially summoned by the KGB for the first time and was threatened because of my educational activities. Again in 1973 I was arrested by the KGB in the basement of a house in Dushanbe where we held secret classes. But fortunately our teacher, Qari Mohammad Jan, was not present at that time. However, all the students who were in the classroom were arrested. The KGB intended to send us to prison and then to exile us to Siberia. But we bribed them and were released.

Then pressures on us and on our father started and we were unable to continue our studies in Dushanbe. Therefore, we went to Forqan Tappeh which was our home and continued our lessons in night classes. It was in the same year that liberation movements were initiated by me and since we were under extreme pressure, we sought solutions so that we would be free to practice our religion and to carry out our Islamic duties. With God's help, we received books from abroad which offered us solutions to our problems. [passage omitted]

With the help of these books and Koranic teachings we reached the conclusion that the Islamic movement should be in the form of an organization, and that the numerous Islamic forces inside Tajikistan should be consolidated and work under the supervision of a group and a movement to vindicate our rights and to propagandize Islamic ideas among the youths who had been distracted from Islam by the communists. For this reason, we formed this group and continued our struggles. [passage omitted]

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Since then what have the activities of this movement been?

[Nuri] [Passage omitted] The revolution in Afghanistan was an impetus to our movement. But the basis of our movement was the victory of the Islamic revolution in Iran in which all the forces in the movement and all the Muslims in Tajikistan trusted. After the Islamic revolution in Iran, these forces were convinced that when Islam was able to prevail in Iran, the same could happen in other countries too. This gave the people self-confidence. [passage omitted]

We were able to achieve the official recognition of the Islamic Movement Party in Tajikistan. Following this recognition, the movement was led by Hemmatzadeh. Our first newspaper was HAQIQAT-E ESLAMI [Islamic Truth], the publication of which led to the arrest of more than 24 of the Islamic Movement's members. Later on a magazine called HEDAYAT [Guidance] was published. After the official recognition of our movement, the Islamic Movement Party started the publication of another newspaper called NEJAT [Salvation].

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Apart from publications, what other activities did the Islamic Movement have?

[Nuri] Among the activities of the Islamic Movement was its calls on youths to turn to Islam and the formation of meetings and gatherings for the people. [passage omitted]

We also established a school with the people's help in order to offer Islamic teaching to our Muslim children. [passage omitted]

Uzbekistan

Karimov, Yeltsin Sign Military Cooperation Treaty

LD1403134894 Tashkent NARODNOYE SLOVO in Russian 10 Mar 94 pp 1,2

[Treaty between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Russian Federation on Cooperation in the Military Sphere]

[Text] The Republic of Uzbekistan and the Russian Federation, referred to hereafter as the parties, confirming their adherence to the aims and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the Helsinki Final Act and other documents on security and cooperation in Europe, each guided, respectively, by the law on basic principles of state independence of the Republic of Uzbekistan of 31 August 1991 and the declaration on state sovereignty of the Russian Federation of 12 June 1990, on the basis of the relevant articles of the treaty on basic principles of interstate relations, friendship and cooperation between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Russian Federation, taking account of treaties and agreements on military issues concluded within the framework of the Commonwealth of Independent States and also the relevant international treaties of which the parties are signatories and taking account of the need for a mutually acceptable and organized resolution of issues connected with the creation of their own armed forces and interest in joint use of military installations situated on the territory of the parties, have agreed on the following.

Article 1

The parties base their relations in the military sphere on the legislation of their states and on decisions on creating their own armed forces adopted in accordance with this legislation.

Article 2

Neither party will allow its territory to be used by a third state or by third states for the purposes of armed aggression or hostile activity against the other party.

Should a threat arise of armed attack by third states, the parties will consult each other both on a bilateral basis and within the framework of associations of states to which both parties belong.

Article 3

By mutual accord the parties allow the siting on their territory of military installations for joint use.

Article 4

The parties will participate in implementing the statement by the representative of the USSR at the joint consultative group on the treaty on conventional armed forces in Europe of 14 June 1991. Measures for the fulfillment of this statement are determined by a separate agreement between the parties.

Article 5

Observing their international obligations, the parties maintain on the agreed basis existing ties in the production and supply of weapons, military equipment, maintenance and technical documentation, components, spare parts and accessories and other materials and also in the repair of military equipment, service under warranty, product recalls, upgrades, research, experimental and design work.

The material and technical supply of those involved in the development and production of weaponry and military equipment is carried out according to state orders from the respective parties.

The parties ensure that the orders of the defense ministries of the parties are placed with industrial enterprises and envisage measures to ensure that they are fulfilled.

The registration of orders and provision of supplies of weaponry, equipment, spare parts and accessories and other materials is carried out on the basis of interstate agreements.

Article 6

The parties will cooperate in exporting weaponry and military equipment and in other matters concerning military and technical interaction with third countries.

The directions and forms of this cooperation as well as the machinery for interaction are regulated by separate agreements.

Article 7

The parties will provide mutual supplies for rear and medical security and for the servicing of troop transports [as published] on the basis of individual agreements between the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation.

Article 8

Supplies of weaponry, military equipment and other materials are provided by each of the parties on to the territory of the other by mutual agreement without levying duties and other taxes.

Article 9

The parties use military test sites in accordance with separate agreements between the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation.

Article 10

The parties will carry out the training of military cadres on the basis of mutual accounts and separate agreements between the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation.

Article 11

The parties will ensure the observance of the social rights of servicemen and individuals released from military service and members of their families while they are moving from the territory of one party to the territory of the other. Measures to implement these rights are regulated by a separate agreement.

Servicemen in the armed forces of one party have the right to transfer to the armed forces of the other party to continue their service. The procedure for transfer and for serving is defined by the 22 January 1993 agreement between the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation on procedure for the performance of military service by officers, noncommissioned officers, warrant officers and servicemen on extended service.

Taking account of the status of servicemen and of the special features of military service, the parties grant the right to servicemen and individuals released from military service and members of their families who move from the territory of one party to reside permanently on the territory of the other to take their belongings, including means of transport, without restriction and without the levying of duties, taxes or dues.

Article 12

The parties retain the existing procedure for using the network of airfields, their air space, communications systems, information and material and technical supply as well as other installations belonging to their military infrastructure by air force units and airborne units of the parties' anti-aircraft defenses.

Article 13

The parties' anti-aircraft defense forces and systems interact and cooperate on issues concerning the exchange of aerospace information, providing assistance to aircraft which meet with calamity or lose their way, and stopping the hijacking or seizure of aircraft.

Article 14

Changes and additions to this treaty may be made on the initiative of either party on the basis of mutual agreement.

Article 15

This treaty is subject to ratification and will come into force on the day on which instruments of ratification are exchanged.

This treaty is valid for five years. The validity of the treaty will subsequently be extended automatically by a further year if, six months before the expiry of the relevant period, neither party notifies the other party in writing of its desire to end it.

This treaty applies provisionally as of the day on which it is signed.

Signed in the city of Moscow on 2 March 1994 in two copies, both in Russian and Uzbek, both texts having equal force, for the Republic of Uzbekistan, I. Karimov, for the Russian Federation, B. Yeltsin.

Karimov, Yeltsin Sign Economic Integration Treaty

LD1403132194 Tashkent NARODNOYE SLOVO in Russian 10 Mar 94 p 1

[Treaty on Deepening Economic Integration Between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Russian Federation]

[Text] The Republic of Uzbekistan and the Russian Federation, referred to hereafter as the parties, guided by the treaty on basic principles of interstate relations, friendship and cooperation between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Russian Federation of 30 May 1992, in order to implement in bilateral relations the provisions of the treaty on creating an economic union, wishing to develop and deepen all-round economic relations on a basis of equal rights, on the basis of interest in developing mutually advantageous economic cooperation, proceeding from the need to accelerate the formation of a common economic space on the territories of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Russian Federation, aspiring to strengthen interstate cooperation in stabilizing the economy and making effective use of the economic potential of both countries, have agreed to the following.

Article 1

The parties will coordinate their actions in the process of implementing economic reforms, promote the preservation and development of mutually advantageous economic ties between enterprises, orgnizations and individual regions of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Russian Federation.

Article 2

The parties will promote a rapprochement in pricing, tax, customs and currency policy in order to create conditions for a phased transition to the free movement of goods, services, capital and the workforce between both states based on the market.

Article 3

Each party proceeds from the recognition of rights of ownership of property situated on its territory but belonging to legal and physical persons of the other party.

The parties will determine a mechanism of state guarantees for the protection of rights of ownership of this property.

Article 4

In order to create conditions for the free movement of goods and the development of reciprocal trade, the parties are to step up their joint work aimed at: The consistent reduction and abolition of customs duties, taxes, dues and other tariff and nontariff restrictions in reciprocal trade; harmonizing and unifying customs legislation and mechanisms for tariff and nontariff regulation and simplifying customs procedures; bringing tariffs for the interstate transportation of goods and passengers into closer line with each other while observing the principle of freedom of transit.

Article 5

Each party recognizes that the other possesses a national currency and will use every possible means to promote the creation of conditions for really ensuring the convertibility of these and maintaining stability in the reciprocal exchange rate of national currencies and also for making payments between the central and commercial banks of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Russian Federation.

Article 6

The parties will speed up work to resolve issues involved in organizing payments in noncommercial operations, primarily the transfer of pensions, maintenance payments, salaries and other payments of a social significance.

Article 7

The parties will instruct their governments to conclude agreements on avoiding double taxation of income and property.

Article 8

The parties will promote the creation and operation of joint enterprises and organizations and investment in installations which are of mutual interest.

Article 9

The parties will take measures to develop scientific and technical cooperation, including activities in space research and use and the creation of an international radio astronomy observatory and other installations.

Article 10

The parties will instruct their appropriate organizations to reach agreement on the regular exchange of economic information according to an agreed program and free of charge.

Article 11

This treaty comes into force when there is final notification that the parties have carried out the necessary internal state procedures and it will remain in force until six months after either party sends the other written notification of its intention to end its validity.

Signed in the city of Moscow on 2nd March 1994 in two copies, both in Uzbek and Russian, both texts having equal force, for the Republic of Uzbekistan, I. Karimov, for the Russian Federation, B. Yeltsin.

Armenia

Accord on Border Troops Signed With Russia

LD1503121694 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1129 GMT 15 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Tigran Liloyan]

[Text] Yerevan March 15 TASS— "The presence of the Russian border troops in the Transcaucasus on the basis of an agreement with Georgia and Armenia points to the recognition of Russia's strategic interests in this region," the Commander in Chief of the Russian Border Troops General Andrey Nikolayev said here today.

On behalf of the Russian president he signed an agreement on the enlistment and service of Armenian citizens in Russia's border troops stationed on the territory of this republic.

Russia and Armenia also signed bilateral protocol on the text of the oath to be taken when joining the Russian border troops.

Both the agreement and the protocol are of extremely great importance, General Nikolayev told ITAR-TASS. They practically complete a series of documents relating to the presence of Russian border troops on Armenian territory and on cooperation between the two countries in protecting the state border.

We have completed all steps connected with the preparation of the necessary legal basis, from the status of presence to the system of manning borderguard units and funding provisions for them, the general said.

General Nikolayev stressed the importance of this accomplishment for Russian border guards and Armenian citizens.

Parliament Head Holds News Conference on Talks

LD1403230094 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 2100 GMT 14 Mar 94

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] We have already reported that last Saturday a meeting of the chairmen of the Supreme Soviets of Armenia and Azerbaijan was held on the Armenian-Azerbaijani border. Today the head of the Armenian parliament held a news conference on its results.

[Correspondent Vladimir Nazaryan] Having simply described the meeting on the border as a useful and constructive one, Babken Araktsyan informed journalists of the contents of the conversation that took place in every detail. The main thing that both sides agree upon is that there is an urgent necessity for a lasting truce in the region which would make political dialogue possible. Mutual understanding was achieved with regard to the issue of the Lachin humanitarian corridor which will be in place even when a separating buffer zone is created around Nagorno-Karabakh. As a unilateral initiative and without any preconditions, Armenia is ready to allow Azerbaijan to use its communications to transfer necessary electric power and freight to Nakhichevan. This would allow the unfounded accusations regarding the blockade of this autonomous republic by Armenia to be dropped.

Calm Continues; Massing of Azeri Troops Noted

NC1403153994 Yerevan Armenia's Radio First Program Network in Armenian 1400 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] We already reported in our previous newscasts today that the situation on our borders has remained relatively calm since yesterday noon. The Armenian Defense Ministry press service just reported that the relative calm was still prevailing at 1600.

The relative calm established over the last few days is still being maintained on most of the Karabakh war fronts. However, Karabakh's positions are still coming under fire in a number of sectors. But no casualties are being reported. Thus, Karabakh forces' positions north of Martuninskiy came under shelling from various guns this morning. The Nagorno-Karabakh Republic Defense Army headquarters said that there was no retaliatory fire. A concentration of Azerbaijani troops and equipment is being observed along most of the war front, in particular on the eastern and southeastern sectors.

Yerevan Denies Promise To Give Up Captured Territory

LD1403194794 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1746 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] Parliamentary Chairman of Armenia Babken Ararktsyan speaking in Yerevan has denied that the question of troop withdrawal from Armenian-held parts of Azeri territory was on the agenda of Saturday's meeting with his Azeri counterpart Rasul Guliyev. His negative answer came in response to a question from an Interfax correspondent asking whether or not he promised Guliyev to withdraw Armenian forces within 20 days as Baku was alleging.

At the same time, Ararktsyan said the withdrawal of troops was envisaged by the CSCE-proposed peace plan of last November which both Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh had approved.

He called for the Lachin corridor linking Armenia with the disputed territory to remain intact.

Ararktsyan spoke of the two sides' renewed commitment to a regional peace settlement. But for this to happen, he said, any talks on Nagorno-Karabakh must follow a durable regional cease-fire.

He stressed the need for the enclave to be made party to regional peace talks.

Ararktsyan spoke of offering his Azeri counterpart to reopen Armenian roads for Azeri shipments of cargoes and fuel to Nakhichevan as a way of "restoring mutual trust and ending charges about Armenia blocking" that Azeri enclave.

State Secretary of Azerbaijan Gabil Huseinli [name as received] maintains that the Armenian side had offered promises of withdrawing its troops from occupied Azeri territories within the next 20 days, at Saturday's meeting between parliamentary leaders of the two countries.

In an interview with Interfax, he said the Armenian pullout would be done in two stages. Initially, the warring sides are to withdraw troops at a distance of 10 km to 15 km away from the engagement line, observers are to be moved into the buffer zone and refugees are to be returned to their homes simultaneously.

Huseinli said that if Armenia kept up its promise by relinquishing at least part of the annexed territory as a goodwill gesture, the prospect of an Azeri-Armenian summit would become ever more real. He said the territory to be relinquished was outside Nagorno-Karabakh while the Lachin corridor linking the enclave and mainland Armenia would remain under Armenian control. In the meantime, Lachin and the Karabakh city of Shusha, whose population was mainly Azeri before the conflict broke out, are to be discussed during talks on the future of the disputed territory, he said.

Huseinli said Baku preferred CSCE-brokered talks on regional peace though praising Moscow's mediation in the peace process despite its traditional support for Armenia.

Russian Republican Party Delegation Arrives

NC1403204494 Yerevan SNARK in English 1603 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] Yerevan, March 14 (SNARK)—Today a delegation of the National-Republican Party of Russia, that was invited by the Special Commission of Armenian Supreme Soviet on the questions concerning Artsakh (Karabakh), arrived in Yerevan. Nikolay Lysenko, the deputy of State Duma, heads the delegation.

Suren Zolyan, the secretary of the parliament commission, told SNARK the representatives of the National-Republican Party are going to have political consultations with different factions and to exchange experience in the fields, which the fractions are interested in.

Today the representatives of National-Republican Party met with political factions and deputies's groups of the Armenian parliament. Tomorrow the representatives are going to leave for Karabakh.

Railroad Communication With Georgia Restored

NC1403204194 Yerevan SNARK in English 1603 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] Yerevan, March 14 (SNARK)—Armenian Ministry of Transport told Snark railway communication between Armenia and Georgia is resumed.

The railway communication was interrupted after subversive act in Marneulinskiy region of Georgia, mainly inhabited by Azerbaijanis. While reconstructing of the railway shipment was accomplished by trucks.

Azerbaijan

Guliyev on Cease-Fire, Talks With Ararktsyan

NC1403190694 Baku TURAN in English 1630 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] Baku (March 14) TURAN—"Recently the defence ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan will begin drafting a ceasefire agreement", said Rasul Guliyev, Azerbaijan's Speaker of Parliament, during a press-conference held in Gazakh. The press-conference was held following his meeting with Babken Ararktsyan, the Armenian Speaker of Parliament.

Rasul Guliyev also said that a verbal agreement had been achieved and according to the agreement Armenian military units must withdraw from the occupied territories of Fizulinskiy, Dzhebrailskiy, Zangelanskiy, Kubatlinskiy and certain sections of Lachinskiy within twenty days after the signing of the agreement signed. It is expected that the agreement will require the Armenian forces to retreat inward from the Karabakh border by ten kilometres. At the same time Azeri forces are expected to move their forces by ten kilometres in the opposite direction, thereby creating a buffer zone where international observers will be stationed. Rasul Guliyev also noted that opposes the relocation of separate forces in the territory of Karabakh. [sentences as received]

He also noted that the Lachin corridor would still be controlled by Karabakh Armenians for the purposes of communication. At the same time, Armenia will be required to end the blocade preventing communication between Nakhichevan and the rest of Azerbaijan.

As soon as the agreement goes into effect, both sides will discuss the status of Upper Karabakh [Nagorno-Karabakh]. Rasul Guliyev didn't tell that whether the discussion would be conducted in the frame of the Minsk group of CSCE or not.

Remarkably, Rasul Guliyev didn't mentioned the Kelbadzharskiy and Agdamskiy regions' setting free from Armenian forces. Though earlier the government leaders stated the freedom of all the occupied territories.

As the observers in Baku note the conditions of the peaceful settlement which Rasul Guliyev notified in Gazakh was proposed by Moscow. Earlier, Baku opposed this plan and considered it "humiliating". However, Moscow has refused to amend the settlement plan and Azerbaijan was obliged to accept it.

In light of this, Russia has taken the next successful step towards consolidating Transcaucasia. At the same time, CSCE appears to fulfill the role as on-looker in the region.

Meeting Discusses Military Situation, Desertions

NC1103182294

[Editorial Report] Baku Azerbaycan Radio Televiziyasi Television Network in Azeri at 1640 GMT carries a 60-minute "extensive report" by correspondent Gulsefa Ahmedova on the 9 March "expanded consultative meeting," attended by deputies and government and regional officials, held at the Supreme Soviet and chaired by Speaker Rasul Guliyev. The report includes recorded excerpts of the meeting.

Ahmedova begins her report by saying that the meeting discussed the military and political situation in the republic, problems connected with the creation of the Army, and measures to end the war.

In a recorded excerpt, Guliyev says: "Azerbaijan has been holding talks at the international level and directly with the Armenians for the peaceful resolution of the military conflict with Armenia. Although there are certain achievements in this regard, they have not yet been implemented. As you know, a protocol was signed on 18 February 1994 between the Armenia and Azerbaijani defense ministers with the participation of the Russian Federation. According to this document, the fighting was to end by 1 March; Armenia's Armed Forces were to withdraw from Nagorno-Karabakh within three days; and, in accordance with our own variant, they were to free the occupied Azerbaijani lands within 14 days. Recently, we received international representatives from the Minsk Group under Eliasson. First, the republic's president met them and then I held talks with them for a few hours. They said that Azerbaijan's position is correct and hoped the Armenians would accept it. They first met us in Baku, then left for Khankendi [Stepanakert] in Nagorno-Karabakh and Yerevan. We were apprehensive that after their visits to Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia they might have changed their views. However, I want to inform you that despite their visits there they have not changed their views and are supporting our own variant and position.

"As always, the Armenians exploited our aspiration for peace and resumed their attacks [words indistinct] mostly in the south in Fizulinskiy Rayon. Bloody battles have continued there the last few days. The Azerbaijani Army is dealing the necessary reply to the Armenian aggressors. Armenians have suffered considerable losses and are unable to achieve anything.

"At around 1900 yesterday, the Chairman of the Armenian Parliament Babken Ararktsyan phoned me and told me that he wishes to meet me to resolve this conflict. I replied that we have always favored the peaceful resolution of the problem and I am ready for talks anywhere, be it in Moscow, Yerevan, Idzhevan, or in any foreign country. We decided that we should meet on the border of Kazakhskiy and Idzhevanskiy Rayons on 12 March to search for ways to peacefully resolve this war.

"The Azerbaijani Republic and its people must deeply understand one thing: The future and destiny of Azerbaijan rests solely in the hands of the Azerbaijani people and citizens. No one, be they close neighbors or friendly countries elsewhere, will solve the Azerbaijani people's problems. For this reason, we must have a strong army and internal unity, must mobilize our economic potential, and deal decisive and courageous blows to the enemy. Such blows will bring peace closer. The opposing side will bow and opt for peace only when faced with force. There is no other alternative."

Guliyev also says that the Azerbaijani side rejected the disengagement plan because it would place people behind the lines and under threat.

He then goes on to strongly criticize the TURAN news agency for publishing reports that freedoms in Azerbaijan are being suppressed.

Resuming her report, Ahmedova says that the speakers complained that the troops are not receiving their wages on time and spoke on measures to establish discipline in the Army and prevent desertions.

In a recorded excerpt, Prosecutor-General Ali Omerov says the Defense Ministry is responsible for the increase in desertions. He accuses the military commissars for criminal behavior in this regard. He also accuses the TURAN news agency for its distorted reports on the seizure of arms from the People's Front headquarters. He said TURAN should publish reports on "objective reality," or face legal measures.

In another recorded excerpt, the military prosecutor says that the main reason for desertions is that "the combat readiness is not up to the desired level." He says in some cases the commanders are telling the soldiers to flee so that they too could flee from the front. Therefore, he says, first of all the training of the military cadres should be improved.

Guliyev interjects and says: "Every one of you have sinned before the Azerbaijani state and people. You must all realize this. And the actions of some of you are criminal in nature. You should know this. You should not think that we are not following your actions. We fully know everything you are involved in. You have come here to discuss what concrete measures to take. If the talk is about desertions, you must openly state, for example, that the deserters should be in a certain location within two days. Therefore, you should talk about concrete military measures you want to implement to speedily extract the Azerbaijan Republic from its present situation. If you want, you can also express your political views."

Guliyev goes on to say that there cannot be internal divisions when it concerns Azerbaijan's territorial integrity. He again indirectly criticizes TURAN's reports as acts of "enmity" against Azerbaijan. He says everybody in the hall are to be blamed for desertions. He ascribes the desertions to the fact that young people have not been imbued enough with feelings of patriotism. He also criticizes those present for their lack of ideas on economic reforms. He says economic reforms, primarily in agriculture, should be launched courageously in each rayon.

He supports the proposal that the Defense Ministry should report to parliament within three or four days that it has resolved the problem of desertions.

He indirectly criticizes certain people for trying to exploit the war for their own interests. He calls on the prosecutor-general and military tribunal to publicize information in papers and on the television on this so "people could see and recognize its enemies."

Defense Ministry on Relative Calm, Cease-Fire

NC1103185594 Baku Azerbaycan Radio Televiziyasi Television Network in Azeri 1600 GMT 11 Mar 94

[Text] The Defense Ministry press service's report for 11 March: A relative calm is prevailing in the aftermath of the recent unsuccessful attacks against our Army's positions by Armenia's Armed Forces. Only localized positional fighting is continuing at various spots.

It appears that having suffered considerable losses during their latest attacks, the Armenian side again wants to return to the negotiating table. The Azerbaijani Armed Forces favor a cease-fire and are ready to ensure the necessary conditions for peace talks.

Armenian Attacks, Mobilization Reported at Front

NC1403192894 Baku TURAN in English 1630 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] Baku (March 14) TURAN—Today, Armenian military units attempted once more to heighten tension at in the front. [sentence as received] In the northern section of Agdamskiy, Azeri positions were shelled by artillery. At the same time, three Armenian tanks launched an attack against Azeri positions in the direction of the region of Fizulinskiy.

In addition, Armenian mobilization can be observed in the Terterskiy region which is located in the northern part of Karabakh.

According to the press-center of the Defence Ministry of Azerbaijan, the Azeri army has yet to take any retaliatory measures despite the provocation made.

Party Statement Protests 'Political Censorship'

NC1403192294 Baku TURAN in English 1630 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] Baku (March 14) TURAN—"The Labour Party is very anxious about the search that was conducted in the offices of 'Azadlyg' newspaper. These events are taking place in the background of the overall political censorship in the republic", says the statement from Mr. Balaevl, one of the founding committee members of the Azerbaijani Labour Party.

The statement also notes that the present government's attitude to towards its critics is intolerant and the government "is striving towards limiting freedom of speech and democratic freedom, in general".

The statement further notes that the Labour Party of Azerbaijan opposes the all forms of radicalism in policy making and criticize this violations.

The Labour Party of Azerbaijan has not been officially registered. The conference of the party which took place on January 2, 1994 was disrupted by the Baku's Yasamal district police department in the presence of deputies, journalists and foreign diplomats.

Georgia

'Exclusive' Interview With Shevardnadze

LD1403183294 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1653 GMT 14 Mar 94

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature: Compiled by Nikolay Zherebtsov, Andrey Petrovsiky, Edited by Vladimir Shishlin]

[Text] An exclusive interview granted by the Georgian leader to Interfax on his return from the United States.

Cor.: You have told the Georgian press that the aims of your visit to the United States have been achieved. To what extent does that apply to the Abkhazian conflict, and what part is Russia expected to play in the settlement of that conflict?

Eduard Shevardnadze: President Bill Clinton and I have reached mutual understanding on all principal issues, above all that of deploying an international peacekeeping force in Abkhazia. This is a difficult matter in practical terms. It poses two problems: First of all, the U.N. Security Council has to take a special decision to that effect, and, secondly, funds have to be raised for it.

The latter problem has practically been solved in the course of my visit to America. I have support in that matter both from the president himself and from appropriate quarters in the U.S. Congress.

This was followed by a meeting of the U.N. Security Council, but before that I had a meeting with U.N. Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali, at which we gave detailed consideration to all the problems the Abkhazian conflict involves. At the Security Council meeting, I spoke about what had happened in Abkhazia, about the causes and consequences of those events and about the present-day situation there. I gave all things their proper names.

The representatives of Russia, the United States, Britain, China, France and other Security Council member states expressed full support for Georgia's policy to settle the conflict. They stressed the need to preserve the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Georgia.

The proposal to urgently send an international peacekeeping force to Abkhazia was supported by practically all members of the Security Council.

There's something I'd like to make a special mention of here. Abkhazian separatist leader Vladislav Ardzinba tried to get to the rostrum of the Security Council in those days. They banned him from it, because he is not the head of a sovereign state. Then he gave a news conference at which, some journalists said, he was giving unintelligible answers and sounded fairly unconvincing altogether. He said there, for example, that bringing a peace-keeping force into Abkhazia would mean its occupation. I said in the United States that if that is occupation all of us should move to another planet.

As for the degree of Russia's participation in that really important process, it is certainly vast. What in fact is happening is coordinated joint action.

May I just remind that, before I went to the United States, President Boris Yeltsin came to Tbilisi and we signed the Treaty on Friendship, Good-Neighborly Relations and Cooperation. After that, the Georgian parliament ratified the documents formalizing our country's membership in the CIS. So after much effort we came round to seeing the need for consecutive cooperation within the Commonwealth to establish lasting peace in Georgia, and consequently in the entire Caucasus, which is in the vital interest of Russia as well.

It is the principle of Georgia that it is wrong today to divide the planet into "our own" and "somebody else's" regions. It is the duty of humankind to take to heart any problem that can become a source of a great tragedy no matter where such a problem arises.

The democratic forces in all countries which value democracy and constructive cooperation should come together. As we get rid of the consequences of the Cold War and internal conflicts, it must be one of our priorities to unite in fighting reactionary and conservative forces, wherever they rear their heads. It seems to me that a U.N. Security Council decision to deploy a peacekeeping force in Abkhazia would be an essential, and possibly the principal contribution to the breaking of the "Abkhazian deadlock," and hence to the elimination of one of the sources of danger. The voting on a resolution to that effect will be preceded by a speech that Butrus-Ghali is due to make at the meeting of March 21. The main point is that such a step should be taken under the aegis of the United Nations. This is today the most fair solution possible.

Corr.: What do you think of the Georgian parliament's decision declaring the Abkhazian parliament an illegal body?

E.S.: I think that was a rather rash step to take, and possibly not very justified in tactical terms. But essentially it does not contradict the political situation in general.

Corr.: What decisions do you expect to be made by the forthcoming congress of the Union of Citizens of Georgia of which you are the head?

E.S.: In brief terms, the aim of that organization is to help stabilize the situation in the country, make the democratic reforms irreversible, increase the influence in society of those forces which are absolutely consistent in their determination to lead Georgia out of its economic crisis, and put an end to all forms of crime.

The decisions of the congress will help solve our most serious problems.

Shevardnadze Presses for UN Involvement in Abkhazia

PM1503091994 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 15 Mar 94 p 3

[Report by Pavel Vasilyev under the "Leaders' Opinion" rubric: "Eduard Shevardnadze: We Are Inviting the UN Blue Helmets Into Georgia"]

[Text] Eduard Shevardnadze's recently ended visit to the United States envisaged at least two goals—obtaining credit to keep the sinking Georgian economy afloat and securing Washington's active assistance in the settlement of the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict, by, among other things, sending a U.S. contingent to that region. And whereas the first task was soon resolved—Bill Clinton responded with $100 million and the Congress agreed to consider increasing that sum—the second task proved a far harder nut to crack. After announcing full political support for the peacemaking efforts the White House boss nevertheless categorically avoided promising to send his soldiers to the Transcaucasus. Not even under the blue flag of the United Nations.

Nevertheless, the U.S. President did give his word to head an international movement to send the UN blue helmets to the border with Abkhazia. This measure will be particularly beneficial given that the latest round of Georgian-Abkhazian talks held in the past few days at UN headquarters in New York ended fruitlessly.

But the idea of international involvement in the search for ways out of the crisis, by all accounts, has not been abandoned by the Georgian leader. He took that idea to New York, where he met with UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali and set out his plan at a session of the

Security Council. There are three "buttresses" to this plan: the creation of a directorate involving the opposing sides and representatives of the High Commissioner for Refugees, Russia, the "friends of Georgia" group, and other UN member states, the institution of a mixed administration in Abkhazia, and after that elections under international control and the formation of new organs of power based on those elections. "A specially created international organ is operating under UN auspices, with the assistance [sodeystviye] of the Russian Federation, and the participation of the CSCE," Eduard Shevardnadze said, "which will cooperate with the directorate and the government of the Republic of Georgia in elaborating and implementing a program for the economic revival of Abkhazia."

Shevardnadze, Nikolayev Discuss Army Status

LD1403204894 Tbilisi First Program Television Network in Georgian 1900 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] The head of the Georgian state today met Colonel General Andrey Nikolayev, the commander in chief of the Russian Border Troops; Major General Lamov, the deputy commander in chief of the Russian border troops; Lieutenant General Zemtsov, the commander of the North Caucasian Border District; and Vladimir Zemskiy, the Russian ambassador Georgia. Colonel Valeri Chkheidze, the commander of the Georgian border troops, was also present at the meeting.

Implementation issues of the agreement signed earlier on the status of the Russian Army deployed in Georgia, as well as the issues of the Russian-Georgian border were discussed at the meeting.

Shevardnadze on Ties With U.S., Russia

LD1403104694 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Georgian 0657 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Interview with Georgian head of state Eduard Shevardnadze by correspondent Nato Oniani; place not given—live]

[Text] [Oniani] Good morning, friends. We are offering you a radio interview with Eduard Shevardnadze, the chairman of the Georgian State Council and head of state.

Batono [Georgian polite form of address] Eduard, the first question, of course, refers to your visit to the United States. In your opinion, how fruitful was it for the Georgian delegation? I am asking you this because having returned to Tbilisi, we heard rumors that the delegation had received a bad reception, and the attitude toward Georgia [words indistinct] and so on.

[Shevardnadze] Thank you. Good morning. The issue pertaining to gossip and rumors, I think that what you mean as gossip and evil rumors really exist. I do not think it is reasonable to keep proving the contrary. Those who closely watch TV programs and listen to the information we provide our population with, they do not need proof of whether the reception was good or bad. Some say that Georgia was well received rather than Shevardnadze. Some, vice versa. I would maintain that malice should also have limits. Let us assume that the delegation received a bad reception. Who should be happy over this? Why should he be happy?

To speak seriously, this has been a moral and political success and I would say a victory. This is a success of a country that has invariably chosen a road of democratic development. In case Shevardnadze betrayed democracy, [words indistinct]. True fighters for real democracy, all true reformers within the space of the former Soviet Union can be considered real heroes and they are persecuted as [words indistinct].

As for gossip and malicious rumors and the venom that certain newspapers spit out, they will eventually eat themselves up. I do not pay much attention to them. Therefore, I even pity them because of their wretchedness and maliciousness. [words indistinct] This is from the point of view of polemics.

Now, about the success. First of all, this is a result we gained from a dialogue with the U.S. Administration. We got support for the issue pertaining to deploying peace-keeping forces in Abkhazia. Support has been clearly expressed. Commitments have been voiced in financing this action.

Second, we have the full right to say that we have a legal basis for relations with this great country. I mean that a Washington declaration has been signed, an agreement on mutual [word indistinct] has been signed. Although we cannot feel the effect of this, all this is extremely important. These are documents, which open large channels for economic and other kinds of cooperation between Georgia and the United States. This is very essential.

Third, I view it as very important that in the course of our dialogue with the president and his associates, as well as in the Congress and the Senate, we managed to familiarize leaders and legislators of this great country with what Georgia is, what we have, what the Abkhazian problem is, who is right and who is wrong. This is of essential importance because this conflict has been viewed with different attitudes at various spheres and levels. The truth of the issue has been demonstrated. The next result, I can say that this has been expected. I regard my meetings with leaders of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund as very important. This will not bring immediate results today but an agreement I brought, the promises that they agree to support us in case we retain stability and strengthen it further mean that in future, we will not have to wander from one country to another in search of kopecks or dollars. All this will happen on a different basis. The financing of our programs, the development of certain spheres and so on will be based on the norms other states have been using. This is also a significant result.

I regard as very important the result of my meeting with Ivan Rybkin, the head of the Russian State Duma, with whom I had an excellent conversation, and I am now even more sure that we will overcome all difficulties that still exist after signing all agreements. [words indistinct] I frankly welcomed the meeting.

The next result—this may be the most important—I mean the meeting of the UN Security Council, where I was given an opportunity to say what a state leader is supposed to say in connection with the Abkhazian conflict. Not just because this is a high podium and one uses this podium, but we want the world to know the truth, we want the Security Council to know the truth. I think that Georgia's position was so explicit and so easy to understand that it was a rather rare case when the meeting of the Security Council proceeded without confrontation and the position of the Georgian delegation received unanimous support and unanimous recognition, especially on issues of the country's integrity and unity, the immediate return of refugees and the necessary guarantees for the deployment of peace- keeping forces. As you were present there you must have noticed that all speeches were almost unanimous on these three basic issues and clearly supported Georgia, which has taken a democratic way of development.

Yet another thing: It seems like an issue of minor importance now, although it is not of minor importance that we received very serious material support, financial support. Incidentally, without request from me, President Clinton announced of his own accord that the United States of America was allotting $70 million [to Georgia]. This is humanitarian aid rather than credit. I have to say that without this aid we would not have other sources after the EC credit had been exhausted.

Thus, I do not know whether we could have thought of gaining more than we did during the three days materially, financially, politically and morally, including the issue that is of major concern to us at the moment, the issue of Abkhazia.

[Oniani] Speaking of Abkhazia, you have said, and it was emphasized in the United Nations too, that such unanimous support was almost unprecedented for the United Nations. No remarks were made regarding our side. It was really amazing that the Russian representative's speech was almost one of the most constructive ones. In addition to the UN Security Council's support, the U.S. President's support, and the support by the U.S. congressmen, we know that no financing of the peacekeeping operation is possible without Congress' opinion. You had a meeting in the Pentagon where an opinion was voiced that the Pentagon would help Georgia. The Secretary of Defense, Perry himself, said that a U.S. military attache would arrive [in Georgia], that they would assist us in the formation of a new army, and this is what we really need in Georgia. What way do you think will remain if a political settlement of the Abkhazian issue over which you have spoken so long and toward which the Georgian policy has been moving cannot be arranged? Are we capable of resolving this problem in a different way if we are not left any other way out?

[Shevardnadze] I would answer the question in this way. We have received very strong support at the UN Security Council. Before that, when the Russian president was in Georgia, we talked, signed agreements, and made mutual commitments over the peaceful settlement of the Abkhazian conflict. Now that all this has happened in Washington and New York and a platform has been established for the peaceful settlement, notwithstanding what the resolution will say, we have to speak about using every path leading to that major road and act respectively. It can be said that we would not dream of a better opportunity. Now, everything will depend on the art of using this opportunity and our vigor. Much will depend on the complete implementation of the agreements.

Now, about the Pentagon's attitude. I do not think that the Pentagon is able to exert a strong influence on our military potential. We have not asked for this either. It is not practical to think of, say, getting armaments, getting warlike stores and so on from them. In this issue we will still depend on Russia, on the Russian Army. The commitments the Russian leadership has made—at least verbally—should be a guarantee that the process of the Georgian Army's formation will be accelerated.

As for the military way [to resolve the Abkhazian problem] you have asked me, I would give you an answer like this. We must always be ready to defend the territorial integrity of our country. No one should have any doubts of our readiness to do this. When I say that our army is in the process of formation, I do not mean that it lacks combat abilities today. So, all branches of our Armed Forces are ready to fight for Georgia's independence, freedom, and the preservation of its territorial integrity.

[Oniani] Batono Eduard, before leaving for the United States you spoke about the danger of a revival of the Cold War. There, in the United States, I think at the meeting with American politicians, the Americans asked a question about it. They were interested in this issue. They recalled your words. I wonder how your American visit strengthened or, on the contrary, eliminated this feeling in connection with recent events in Russia, a feeling that the danger of a return to the Cold War period could become a reality.

[Shevardnadze] As for the danger of a Cold War, of which you have just spoken, and there were quite a lot of questions referring to this issue there [in the U.S.], a danger of recurrence is real. Confrontation between the United States and Russia could become the major feeding source of the recurrence if this were allowed to happen.

I spoke about the inadmissibility of this sort of confrontation at every level in the United States. This was during a dialogue with the President and his associates. I spoke about it at the Congress, at the Senate, at meetings with political and other figures. The idea was indirectly expressed in my speech at the Security Council meeting and other speeches I made in the United States.

The next phenomenon that could push mankind toward Cold War is a rather widely spread aggressive separatism that grows into conflicts. You may remember that I spoke about it [words indistinct]. At that time I had the impression that this pained some people's ears.

Today, the world has realized that this aggressive separatism, that cost Georgia so much, may grow into a grave threat for the whole planet. Yugoslavia is a good example. This is an explosive triggering device, which is present in a number of countries. I am afraid that if this is not stopped and these current conflicts are not settled, the danger of cold and hot wars will become reality.

I am pleased that conversations in the United States touched upon this issue and Georgia's opinion, an opinion of its leader that evoked everyone's interest, not because we were inventors but because we have been in the middle of events of this kind and, therefore, we feel this in a more acute way than others, and see the scale of the threat. But the main thing is to rule out any serious confrontation between these two countries and this will be a guarantee for peace.

[Oniani] The situation in Georgia is rather critical today. [Word indistinct], transport is not working and so on and so on. You had very interesting meetings at the World Bank, with the Monetary Fund, OPEC, you have already mentioned. Regarding the significant and good plans drafted for Georgia, how deep and lasting do you think our economic crisis will be?

[Shevardnadze] I have to say in this connection that our economic crisis is additionally [words indistinct]. During talks with an expert from the World Bank and the executive secretary, it was emphasized that our country, with its situation in western Georgia, differs from many other countries in a critical situation by complexity and difficulties. But, at the same time, it was said that if we stuck to the course we had taken toward establishing and strengthening stability, establishing order in the country, and if we stirred up the potential we possessed, these immense international organizations would be ready to help Georgia. If this happens the length of the crisis will become shorter and chances will increase to escape from the crisis sooner.

The way out depends on how well we manage our own country. In the first instance order is essential and at the same time it is necessary to use all the potential we possess. We have to harvest tea, to harvest grapes, to harvest fruit, we have to plow soil, we have to run industry as it can be run. I think that in such conditions we will be able to come out of the crisis [word indistinct].

[Oniani] It often happens that your foreign trips are echoed in Georgia. It may be an explosion, it may be a murder or something like that. The same happened this time. There were explosions in the buildings of the Rescue Corps and the Chamber of Control. How would you comment on these events? I would not want to say this, but the explosion in the Rescue Corps building has a flavor of terrorism, while the explosion in the Chamber of Control looks more like a political act. We remember that last year you said at parliament that documents connected with [words indistinct] activities would be sealed and the Chamber of Control would be starting work on the issue having collected certain materials.

[Shevardnadze] It seems to me the same way. When we speak about terrorist acts, some deputies speak at parliament and throw stones into the state's garden, I mean they blame the state. They speak of state terrorism. Did the state blow up the headquarters of the civil defense [the Rescue Corps is occupying this building]? Or can a man of reason think of causing an explosion in the Chamber of Control?

Ruling out any interference and influence, I would like to say the following: We are facing unruly banditry. These are acts of banditry, acts of subversion. I have to emphasize one thing. We have had a lot of good words to say to the Ministry of Security and the Interior Ministry. But now we have to say that neither the Ministry of Security nor the system of interior affairs fight against crime as they are expected to.

A system of raiding criminal groups is a very good job and it is very efficient. [sentence as heard] But now it is time for a decisive say from the Ministry of Security, and the whole system of the ministry has to demonstrate its professional skills in fighting terrorist acts. It is in the state's interest, the whole state structure's interest, to have all criminal cases revealed and have criminals punished. I will tell you openly that we have to make and we will make the law enforcement bodies reveal all terrorist cases.

Georgia's authority as a civilized, cultural, and normal country should be restored. This is the republic's cause. I can say that this is a national cause, a state cause, and we must do this.

[Oniani] The final question: A regular working week for parliament begins tomorrow. Have you introduced any alterations into your plan of parliamentary activities?

[Shevardnadze] The parliament will apparently be working according to planned subjects. There are certain ideas but I would say one thing; during my visit to the United States and especially when I had meetings with representatives of business and financial circles and so on, the main questions pertained to legislature. What laws have the Georgian parliament managed to pass that would help develop the economy. What fate will foreign investments have in Georgia. They are interested not in generalized laws but in details. In this respect our parliament is lagging behind. It is significantly lagging and it should be admitted that the chairman [Shevardnadze] and the speaker with his deputies cannot manage well. Many laws, over 60 laws are ready and we are not able to pass them.

I should also say that our parliament is not keen on passing laws. They would rather be active in the political sphere than economic. This is not a fault. We must be involved in every sphere. Today however, overcoming the crisis is a major task and many deputies demand that economic reforms be implemented as soon as possible. But no reforms will be implemented if legislative activity is not properly directed. In this respect, if there is any draft law, then parliament must work on it. Parliament must work on drafting laws and their soonest possible implementation. For instance, the law on land. There were a lot of debates on this law but we could not reach consent and then we abandoned the law. Now, I am asked to issue a decree on it. I cannot do this. Land is such a problem, such a painful and delicate problem [words indistinct].

This sort of alteration, or rather turn in the activities of the parliament, especially in the economic sphere is a must.

[Oniani] Thank you for the interview. You have been listening to Eduard Shevardnadze.

Abkhazia Reports Georgian Troops Still Amassing

LD1403162294 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1359 GMT 14 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Irina Shchegoleva]

[Text] Sochi March 14 TASS—Georgian troops continue to mass along the Inguri River separating Georgia from Abkhazia, according to the Abkhazian Defence Ministry.

The ministry said subversive groups are infiltrating the Galiy District. To combat crime and prevent possible acts of sabotage, the Abkhazian Government has ruled to establish special OMON [Special Purpose Militia Detachment] troops, Abkhazian Ministry of the Press and Information officials told ITAR-TASS on Monday.

Tuesday, March 15, will mark a year since the failure of the Abkhazian offensive on Sukhumi, capital of the independence-seeking republic, which resulted in mass casualties and heavy damage. Tomorrow residents of Abkhazia will mourn the victims of the war.

Reaction to Dissolution of Abkhaz Parliament

LD1103205594 Moscow NTV in Russian 1600 GMT 11 Mar 94

[Video report by correspondent Izark Vasilidze, including recorded remarks by Vakhtang Gogaudze, Georgian Supreme Council speaker and Zurab Erkvania, chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia]

[Text] Another provocation and an attempt to destabilize the situation in the republic—that is the leitmotif of the view of the Abkhazian Parliament of yesterday's action by the Georgian Supreme Council, which I will remind you adopted a resolution dissolving the Abkhazian Parliament. Tbilisi also continues to discuss this topic.

[Vasilidze] The unanimity with which the resolution was adopted leads one to think that either a solution to the Abkhazian question already exists, and everything is ready for its implementation, or that it is one of those purely academic issues at the level of juridical law making. Having spoken to officials, the opinion remains that the whole affair is most probably within the realm of the second alternative. Inter alia Vakhtang Goguadze, the speaker of the [Georgian] Supreme Council, replied to the question of how the decision will be implemented, saying:

[Goguadze] It depends on the further development of the situation, the general circumstances; what things are like in Russia, Georgia, our mutual understanding and relations—it depends more on this than directly on the decision adopted.

[Vasilidze] Regarding the question of the possible renewal of military actions in Abkhazia by the Georgian leadership, Vakhtang Goguadze replied:

[Goguadze] For our part, for the part of the leadership, this is in no way permissible. Therefore, Abkhazia should be demilitarized, and then we have to restore police order, and live according to the language of the Constitution.

[Vasilidze] Zurab Erkvania, the chairman of the council of ministers of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia, which by the Supreme Council's decision received the status of the temporarily evacuated and only legal body of authority in Abkhazia until elections are held, spoke about the situation in Abkhazia.

[Erkvania] The confederation, which is calling the tune on the temporarily occupied territory of Abkhazia is virtually, in essence, a terrorist, illegal organization that was formed on the territories of independent, sovereign states—the Russian Federation and the Republic of Georgia. It is evident that this resolution gives a legal evaluation of their criminal activities.

[Vasilidze] At the same time, the Georgian Supreme Council's decision clearly arouses increased interest by Russia as well. There is no doubt that today's confidential meeting between Vladimir Zemskiy, the Russian ambassador to Georgia, and the Supreme Council's speaker, touched on this theme.

Izark Vasilidze from Tbilisi, specially for NTV.

[Announcer] Certain very confidential sources claim that Eduard Shevardnadze secretly met the Abkhazian leader Vladislav Ardzinba in New York, and it is not ruled out that this information made it to the Georgian Supreme Council, causing such a harsh reaction.

Talks With Abkhazia Interrupted

LD1503155094 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1404 GMT 15 Mar 94

[Text] The talks on settling the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict will not be continued until the Georgian parliament cancels its decision of dissolving the Abkhazian parliament, Chairman of the Abkhazian parliament Vladislav Ardzinba told Interfax after a press conference in Moscow on Tuesday.

He also said that the peace process was over and laid the entire blame for this on Georgia.

On March 10, the Georgian parliament charged Abkhazia's Council of Ministers with the task of performing the Abkhazian parliament's functions pending early parliamentary elections, and granted the Council of Ministers the status of a temporarily discharged body.

The Georgian parliament's resolution says that all legal acts passed by the Abkhazian separatists shall be considered invalid.

Abkhazia Reportedly Unopposed to UN Presence

NC1503135794 Yerevan SNARK in English 1007 GMT 15 Mar 94

[Text] Moscow, March 15 (SNARK)—"Shevardnadze's visit to UN was an attempt to win back by diplomatic means what had been lost in Abkhazian war. By means of the UN peacemaking forces, and under the thesis of Georgia's territorial integrity, Shevardnadze attempts to provide this integrity de-facto". This was the comment given to SNARK correspondent in Moscow by Zurab Achba, the Chairman of Legislation Committee in Abkhazian Parliament, while he spoke on the Georgian head visit to the USA.

As Achba told, the Abkhazian leadership does not mind the presence of the UN peacekeeping forces in the conflict zone. "We only object those functions which they are intended to be given. Peace forces are entitled to prevent the military actions, and should be dislocated along the confrontation line, not on the entire territory of Abkhazia", declared Achba.

Officials Discuss Missing Persons

LD1403190994 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1745 GMT 14 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Irina Shchegoleva]

[Text] Sochi March 14 TASS—Georgian and Abkhazian representatives met at a border-guard post at the Psou River on Monday to discuss exchange of prisoners of war and search for missing persons.

The Georgian party handed over lists of 870 persons missing in military clashes in Abkhazia. The Abkhazian representatives promised to assist in searching for them.

Both the parties exchanged specific data, addresses, surnames of missing persons and promises to inquire into each particular case.

The parties agreed to go ahead with cooperation in the field.

The Georgian delegation was led by Paat Zakareishvili, deputy chairman of the State Committee for Protection of Human Rights, the Abkhazian one - by Rezo Zantariya, deputy chairman of the State Commission on Exchange of Prisoners of War.

The Sochi-based Staff for Civil Defence and Emergencies contributed to organization of the meeting.

Opposition To Seek Supreme Court Ruling on CIS

PM1403150794 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 12 Mar 94 p 2

[ITAR-TASS report: "Georgian Parliamentary Opposition 'Against' CIS Membership"]

[Text] The Georgian parliamentary opposition has given a hostile reception to the decision of the majority of the deputies on the republic's membership of the CIS. This decision has been perceived by the opposition as "support for Russia's imperial ambitions in the post-Soviet area." Deputies from the National Independence Party, the National Democratic Party, the People's Front, and a number of other parties (16 in all) are holding joint consultations and meetings to elaborate a policy of opposition to Georgia's inclusion in the CIS.

It has reached the stage where the opposition intends to appeal to the republic's Supreme Court because, in its opinion, parliament's decision on Georgia's membership of the CIS is unlawful. Its appeal is based on the fact that this decision was made by a simple majority of deputies and not two-thirds of them, even though the republic's legislation contains no clear ruling on that question.

Communists Lead S. Ossetian Election Campaign

LD1403194194 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1746 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] The Communist Party is leading in the pre-election campaign for a new parliament in South Ossetia, the self-proclaimed republic on the territory of Georgia, deputy chairman of the Central Electoral Commission Makhar Gasiyev told Interfax. He said 185 candidates have been registered for 41 seats in a new parliament to be elected on March 27.

Gasiyev said opinion polls show that the Communist Party is supported by 90 percent of the South Ossetian-population. "People are tired of the never-ending disorder." "People need to be protected, and they lay their hopes on the new parliament," Gaisyev said.

Estonia

Tiimann 'Ready' for Removal of Nuclear Fuel

WS1403210494 Tallinn BNS in English 1329 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] Tallinn, Mar 14, BNS—Estonia is in every respect ready for the removal of nuclear fuel from Paldiski, Ago Tiimann, secretary of the Estonian delegation for talks with Russia and head of the military issues working group, told BNS.

Tiimann said the dismantling of the Paldiski reactors is the only military issue under discussion at the negotiations "on which (the delegations) have been working closely together."

"To date, everything has proceeded as planned and in accordance with agreements," Tiimann claimed.

Russia has more than once announced that it is prepared to start removal of nuclear fuel from Paldiski already in April and complete it by June.

Tiimann said all possible safety and security measures will be taken during the operation, which is the reason why the dates and the route will not be made public.

Russia plans to use for transporting the fuel new, TK-18 type containers, which have never before been used for this purpose. The authorities are going to test the containers in March to find out if they meet safety standards.

Legislators Introduce Bill To Change Election Law

WS1403211194 Tallinn ETA in English 1744 GMT 14 Mar 94

["News Release"]

[Text] Tallinn, March 14—Twenty seven MPs on Monday [14 March] presented the parliament a bill on amendments to Estonia's Constitution to change the current election law under which the president is elected by the parliament if none of the candidates receives the majority of votes at presidential elections.

Under the bill, the two candidates who have gathered most votes would compete for the position in the second round of elections two weeks after the first round.

Laar Predicts 40 Percent Inflation Rate

WS1403122194 Tallinn BNS in English 1707 GMT 13 Mar 94

[From the "Baltic Business Weekly" feature]

[Text] For already two months in a row Estonia has an unusual for that Baltic nation high monthly inflation of about 5.5 percent, which is not likely to fall in the oncoming several months.

But Prime-Minister Mart Laar says the inflation is going to drop due to slower growth in the country's hard currency reserves.

The consumer price index in Estonia rose 5.2 percent in February, down just a bit from January's 5.5 percent, prompting experts to review the earlier predicted 15-25 percent annual inflation level for this year.

Goods became an average 4.6 percent more expensive last month, the report by the Statistics Department shows. The price rise for food was reported at 6.8 percent, and for manufactured goods, 0.9 percent. The prices of services rose 6.3 percent. The total price rise in the country was 43.1 percent when compared with the same month a year ago.

Fruit and vegetables topped the price rise list for separate groups of goods with 15 percent in February. Milk, dairy products and eggs followed with 11.9 percent, and fats, with 9.7 percent. Also substantial was the rise of alcohol prices, 10.3 percent, mainly due to a increased excise tax. Expenses for housing went up 5.1 percent in February, and for transport and communication, 5.0 percent.

Relatively high inflation rates in the first two months of the year have rendered it unlikely that Estonia would be able to make the year within the earlier predicted 15-25 percent inflation level. There is not much improvement in prospect this month, as price rises became effective on March 1 alone for telephone calls, ferry and railway tickets, water supply, sewage, and, in some places, for bread and milk.

Experts questioned by BNS now predict an annual inflation of around 30 percent for 1994.

Estonian Premier Mart Laar Predicts 1994 Inflation at 40 Percent

Laar emphasized that the high rate of inflation observed through the first two months of the year will not reduce in the first half of the year and will amount to a monthly 5-6 percent.

The Premier believes, however, that in the second half of 1994, inflation will drop to 1.5-2 percent a month which would allow not to exceed the level of 40 percent through the entire 1994.

According to Laar, one of the main reasons for the inflation spirals in early year is a fast growth in the country's currency reserves. "Estonia currently has such an amount of money which is simply hard to handle," Laar told BNS.

In the premier's words, an interim hike in inflation resulted from a too speedy development of Estonia's economy over the second half of 1993. "This is something new. The IMF experts have been also surprised and cannot provide an explanation," Laar said. According to the premier, "similar was experienced some time ago by the Czechs."

The premier also highlights that despite growing inflation, "there are no causes for alarm. We receive encouraging reports about a slowing pace in the growth of hard currency reserves. This means that inflation will start to drop in two-three months." Laar stressed in addition that Estonia has sufficient guarantees, such as a balance budget, eliminated subsidies and a solid money legislation, to survive from such financial shakes.

Meanwhile, the Bank of Estonia said the inflation in January was only 15.6 percent due to the increasing money supply. The bank's monthly economic overview says that high inflation of the last months "had no monetary basement".

More grounds for the Laar's optimism lie in the fact that another source triggering inflation will go down soon. "To a large extent, inflation is explained by our decision late last year to liquidate the remaining subsidies to households for transport, housing and energy. The major part of inflation attributes directly to the suspended subsidizing of prices for these services," stressed the premier.

Government Approves Bill on Broadcasting

WS1103210894 Tallinn BNS in English 1859 GMT 11 Mar 94

[Text] Tallinn, Mar 11, BNS—The Estonian Government approved yesterday a bill on broadcasting and passed it to the parliament for consideration.

The bill establishes radio, television and teletext as forms of broadcasting. Under the bill, one Estonian-language television channel, one Estonian-language teletext channel, two Estonian-language radio channels and one Russian-language radio channel will be financed from the state budget.

The bill stipulates that tapes of radio and television programs must be preserved for a period of three months.

The bill establishes the principle of political balance under which the national broadcasting channels must give all political parties the same amount of air time.

The bill bans tobacco advertising and advertisements that promote consumption of alcohol. It forbids the use of newscasters and political commentators in advertising.

The broadcasting bill was drafted by former Justice Minister, attorney Mart Rask and Rein Lang, one of the owners of AS Trio that operates the Tallinn-based Kuku radio station.

Government Decreases Ostankino Transmission Time

LD1103203594 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1920 GMT 11 Mar 94

[Text] The Estonian Government decided to cut down the transmission time of the Russian TV broadcasting company Ostankino on the territory of the republic from 9.5 to 4 hours a day starting on March 11, Government Press Secretary Ain Saarna told a briefing in Tallinn Friday [11 March]. He said the only Russian channel in Estonia will be broadcast every day from 18:00 to 22:00.

Saarna explained the measure by saying that Russia owed about DM [German marks] 200,000 to Estonian Esttelecommunications for relaying the broadcasts.

The Estonian government asked Esttelecommunications to inform Ostankino of its decision and to conclude a new contract envisioning the reimbursement of its debt and regulating other procedural issues before March 28. Otherwise, Ostankino programs will no longer be broadcast on Estonian territory, Saarna said.

Pensioners Protest Inadequate Pensions

LD1503114794

[Editorial Report] Tallinn Radio Tallinn Network in Estonian at 1000 GMT on 15 March broadcasts a 5.-minute report on a meeting of pensioners in Tallinn today, near the parliament and government building on Toompea Square. The unidentified correspondent notes that Marju Lauristin, the minister of social affairs, was surrounded by pensioners eager to voice their grievances and she promised to convey their problems to the government, which is scheduled to meet this morning.

The correspondent then interviews Lauristin who says that the pensions issue is a priority for the government but extra money is hard to find. "What we have done now," she explains, "is to provide compensation totalling 200 million kroons for domestic bills and there is a law on increasing pensions being debated now—another 200 millions are needed for that. To the population at large this will seem like a crumb to a beggar. And public discontent is particularly bolstered by the fact that incomes have become so different and these differences in wages and incomes can be as much as 20 or 30 times."

Latvia

Slow Progress in Russian-Latvian Talks

LD1403170894 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1400 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] [Announcer] As has already been reported, Latvian- Russian interstate talks resumed in Moscow today. Ritums Rozenbergs, Latvian Radio Moscow correspondent and the LABRIT newspaper, will tell us more.

[Rozenbergs] This morning, the Latvian and Russian delegations considered texts of the agreement. The delegations agreed that additional consultations were needed on certain issues. As a result of the meeting held this morning, both the Russian and Latvian sides hope that the social security issue for Russian military pensioners will be tackled. However, findings of banks' experts are needed in order to reach this agreement. So then, it is necessary to clarify the mechanism of the payment of pensions.

On the issue of the Skrunda military base the delegations decided at the morning meeting that the text of the agreement would be acceptable for both sides. The Russian delegation has not yet given final consent in connection with the fact that a rent payment of 400 million dollars a year, demanded by the Latvian side, is under question. The Latvian side expresses the wish that several agreements favorable to Latvia could be reached.

Ritums Rozenbergs, special Moscow correspondent of the LABRIT newspaper, specially for Latvian radio.

Churkin Comments on Deadline

WS1403121994 Tallinn BNS in English 1335 GMT 12 Mar 94

[Text] Riga, Mar 12, BNS—Russia has made no promises to Estonia and Latvia about withdrawing its troops from those countries by Aug. 31, 1994, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Vitaliy Churkin said in an interview with the Latvia-based Diena newspaper.

The Russian diplomat admitted, however, that Moscow has not officially refused to pull out its troops.

Churkin said the Russian Foreign Ministry has adopted a new tactical line, that of ignoring Baltic diplomats' critical statements. "At the recent sessions of the Council of Europe Security Council and the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (Russian Foreign Minister Andrey) Kozyrev didn't say a word about his Baltic colleagues, although we don't see eye to eye with them on a number of issues, including observance of human rights," he said.

Churkin assured that, as an official in charge of relations with the Baltic states at the Russian Foreign Ministry, he has "no evil intentions" with regard to those countries, and promised to do his best in seeking concrete solutions to the problems that have cropped up.

Agreements Ready for Signing With Russia

LD1503093694 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 0600 GMT 15 Mar 94

[Text] We begin with a report from Moscow by correspondent Ritums Rozenbergs in which he says that at the end of the first day of the Latvian-Russian talks, Latvian delegation chief Martins Virsis said that two things were not coordinated. One about payment for rent of the Skrunda military facility and the other one concerning the wording of the text of the agreement. However, in spite of the disagreements, there is hope that an agreement will be reached in the nearest future, possibly today.

The main achievement of yesterday's talks is an agreement prepared for signing on the army withdrawal and two agreements on social guarantees for the Russian military. It has been agreed in the document that pensions will be paid to Soviet army pensioners, that is, to those who had become pensioners by January '92. A new stage is characteristic of this round of talks, because documents which have been discussed for several years have practically been prepared for signing.

U.S. Supports Russian Pullout by 31 Aug

LD1403184894 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1700 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] As the Foreign Affairs Ministry press center reports, Latvian Foreign Minister Georgs Andrejevs has received a letter from U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher. The letter once again expresses U.S. Government support for the Russian Army withdrawal from Latvian territory by 31 August 1994, and shows an understanding of the Latvian people's problems. The Skrunda issue is also mentioned and it is stated that the U.S. Government is considering possible financial support in the issue of dismantling the Skrunda [facility].

Christopher also expressed understanding of the tackling of the citizenship issue in Latvia.

NATO Military Official Arrives for Talks in Riga

LD1403191094 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1700 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] Field Marshal Sir Richard Vincent, chairman of the NATO Military Committee, arrived in Riga today. At a meeting with Dainis Turlais, commander of the Latvian defense forces, and other government representatives, Vincent discussed Latvia's participation in the NATO Partnership for Peace program and the course of the establishment of a Baltic peacekeeping battalion. The Latvian representatives familiarized the guest with the structure of the Latvian defense forces and problems of legislation related to the defense forces. This is the first visit to Latvia by such a high-ranking NATO official.

Document on Russian Airfield Handover Signed

LD1403190094 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1500 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] The command of a Russian Army unit and the board of Daugavpils district have signed a document on the handover of the Russian military airfield at Lociki to the Daugavpils local authority.

Agreement was reached with the Russian military on all the clauses of the document, except for the issue of the material value of the airfield and facilities belonging to it—hangars, warehouses, air traffic control buildings, and other premises. The Russian military believe that the total value of all these facilities is 9 billion Russian rubles, or approximately 2.96 million lats. The document will be submitted to the command of the Russian Northwestern Group of Forces for assessment of the value of the facility. After that the document will be submitted to Edmunds Krastins, state minister for state property at the Latvian Ministry of Finance.

The board of Daugavpils district declares that the abovementioned airfield is the last Russian Army facility in Daugavpils district.

Further Details

WS1403210694 Tallinn BNS in English 1617 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] Daugavpils, Latvia, Mar 14, BNS—The Russian army Command and the Latvian Daugavpils region administration signed the handover-takeover papers of a former Soviet military airfield at Lociki.

The parties agreed on all paragraphs of the document except on the material value of the airfield compound. They decided to view the issue separately.

The Russian military persons assess the total value of all installations at 9 billion Russian rubles, or around 5.2 million U.S. dollars. Latvia, however, prices the compound at 4 billion Russian rubles, or 2.3 million dollars.

The sums have to be coordinated by the Northwest Army Group command and the Latvian Finance Ministry.

The local authorities claim that the Lociki airfield was the last Russian military installation in the Daugavpils region.

Agreement Avoiding Dual Taxation Signed

LD1403225494 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 2027 GMT 14 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Taras Lariokhin]

[Text] The Hague, 14 Mar—The integration of the Russian-speaking population into a society with a diverse culture is the main condition for stable internal development in Latvia and for the establishment of the necessary neighborly relations with Russia, Ruud Lubbers, the prime minister of the Netherlands, said at a dinner in honor of his colleague Valdis Birkavs. The prime minister of the Latvian Republic arrived in Holland today on a three-day visit.

In his turn, V. Birkavs stressed that Latvia is going through a difficult, transitional period in its development now. It is made even more complicated by difficulties in its relations with Russia. Nevertheless, the head of the Latvian Government said, the people of the Latvian Republic believe in the prospects for democratic development in the country and hope for the support of other nations. Latvia has firmly declared its intent to gradually become a member of the European Union and to join international security structures. In this connection, the prime minister of Latvia asked the Netherlands for support.

Today, the sides signed two agreements—on avoiding dual taxation and on protecting investments. V. Birkavs expressed the hope that even more important bilateral economic agreements would be drawn up soon.

Poll: 81 Percent Face 'Serious' Hardships

WS1403210194 Tallinn BNS in English 1820 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] Riga, Mar 14, BNS—Around 52.2 percent of Latvian families find it difficult to make both ends meet at the end of month, according to a public opinion poll, conducted by the State Statistics Committee.

The poll showed that 13.9 percent of families live on earlier savings, 14.9 percent have enough money but 0.7 percent are amply provided.

In total, 81 percent of families face serious money hardships.

Sixty-eight percent of respondents reported unable to save in the present conditions. Almost two-thirds of the interviewed said they could not make valuable purchases and would not be able to do it in the next twelve months, either.

The economic standing of families became worse between 1992 and 1993, say the majority of respondents. Only 0.6 percent of families said they enjoyed an improvement in their material situation last year.

In addition, the families criticize the changes in the Latvian economic situation in 1993. Sixty-one percent of families say the economic situation became worse during the past year while 7.5 percent say the economic situation improved.

The poll interviewed 1,298 families. From those, 56 percent were urban dwellers and 46 percent lived in the countryside. The poll was aimed at studying the public opinion on the latest material welfare and economic situation changes in families.

State Statistics Committee on Population Exodus

WS1403120294 Tallinn BNS in English 1335 GMT 12 Mar 94

[Text] Riga, Mar 12, BNS—Latvia's population decreased 28,000 in 1993 on the account of interstate migration, according to figures from the State Statistics Committee.

As many as 19,291 person resettled for permanent residence in Russia, 5,120 left for Belarus, 3,427 for Ukraine and for Israel.

The population exodus to neighboring Lithuania and Estonia was 346 and 99, respectively. Another 744 people went to live in Germany, 559 in the United States, 34 in Canada and 32 to Australia.

Ethnically speaking, emigrants included 17,762 Russians, 3,681 Belarusians, 3,676 Ukrainians, 1,161 Hebrews, 448 Poles, 236 Germans and 205 Lithuanians.

As a result of migration processes, the number of ethnic Latvians among permanent residents increased 382 people last year.

Unemployment Reportedly Doubled in 1993

WS1103135194 Riga LETA in English 1310 GMT 11 Mar 94

[Text] RIGA, March 11, (LETA)—The number of officially registered jobless in Latvia increased more than twofold in 1993. For January 1, 1994, the number was 76,744. The data was reported by the statistics catalogue worked out by the Ethnic Matters Center of the Latvian Institute of Philosophy and Sociology. The center's experts, while analyzing the current employment situation in Latvia, concluded that this social illness affects people irrespective of their ethnic nationality. A total number of jobless includes 36,363 Latvians, 28,464 Russian, 4,294 Belarusians, 2,245 Ukrainians, 1,925 Poles, and 1,251 Lithuanians. Jews have the smallest percentage of unemployed.

Lithuania

Minister To Initial Friendship Pact With Poland

WS1403210794 Tallinn BNS in English 1617 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] Vilnius, Mar 14, BNS—The Lithuanian Foreign Ministry confirmed reports that Foreign Minister Povilas Gylys intends to go to Warsaw Friday [18 March] to initial the Lithuanian-Polish agreement on friendship and cooperation.

The treaty will presumably be signed by the presidents of Lithuania and Poland already this spring. The accord will come into effect after it is ratified by the Lithuanian parliament and when the sides exchange ratification documents.

Lithuanian and Polish experts last week completed editing the text of the treaty.

At a press conference in Vilnius Monday, Gylys said the text of the treaty will be publicly announced in accordance with "the established order."

The minister admitted that Lithuania and Poland failed to fully coordinate their positions on the 1920 occupation of Vilnius and its region by Poland. But Gylys said an emphasis should be laid on the future, not on the past. "The past is too heavy a burden."

"Many wounds, as well as reasons to start polemics or even conflicts, remained in the postwar Europe, but European states rose above all this and chose integration," the minister said. In his words, "if we will base relations with neighbors on wrongs, we will become a zone of tension."

Minister Gylys emphasized the need to have "a strong political basis" for solutions to practical problems. In his opinion, the treaty will become such a basis.

Commenting on criticism that the accord does not include sufficient security guarantees for Lithuania, Gylys said the treaty clearly says that neither of the states have any territorial claims and consider present borders inviolable.

The treaty was sharply criticized by MP Romualdas Ozolas, head of the parliament's commission for regional affairs. The lawmaker also made some sharp remarks about the Polish ambassador to Lithuania.

Minister Gylys said such statements "practically insult nations and diplomats accredited in our country." The minister said he was surprised that Ozolas, who is the chairman of the Lithuanian Center Union, expresses such "eccentric" views.

'Side-Borders' of Territorial Waters Approved

WS1403195994 Tallinn BNS in English 1820 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] Vilnius, Mar 14, BNS—The Lithuanian Government approved two furthermost points of land in the sea which are necessary to determine the border of the country's territorial waters.

According to a March 10 government resolution, the northern "side-point" is on the territory of the Palanga resort, while the southern point is located on the Kursiu peninsula on the border with the Kaliningrad region.

According to the Lithuanian law, the country's territorial waters extend 12 nautical miles off the coast. According to the international conventions that Lithuania signed, the sea border must run more or less parallel to the coastline without any major deviations.

Zenonas Kumetaitis, director of the Lithuanian Geodesy Service, said the absence of a clear territorial sea border was a major hindrance in talks with Latvia and Russia on sea border. In his words, Lithuania will now be able to determine "side-borders" with its neighbors.

President's Office Chief Interviewed

WS1403135694 Vilnius TIESA in Lithuanian 8 Mar 94 No. 45 p 4

[Interview with President's Office chief Andrius Meskauskas by Raimonda Rameliene in Vilnius; date not given: "A Year in the Life of the President's Office: The Work With the President Was Free of Reservations and Doubts"]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted]

[Rameliene]**Can one say that the president has a good, powerful, and competent team?**

[Meskauskas] The absolute majority of those who work here have come to work for the president without any reservations and doubts. Certainly, not all of them understood immediately how they should work. The president is very tactful, friendly, and sincere but he is also a demanding person and he does not like to repeat things twice. All of us try to perform our duties as honestly as possible.

[Rameliene]**The president's staff lead quite a settled way of life. Only one "ordinary" adviser and the chief one [Rajeckas was appointed ambassador to Great Britain] left over the first year. By the way, was it impossible to realize before the first anniversary that the position of the chief adviser is unnecessary?**

[Meskauskas] The question could be whether the function of the chief adviser was interpreted correctly. The president, as well as the majority of our staff, likes to deal with people directly—with those who directly analyze some problem, work on some issue, and so on. Certainly, Mr. R. Rajeckas is a man with extraordinary skills. However, such were the circumstances. I do not know whether we will retain this position in the future or not.

[Rameliene]**People say that another adviser will soon leave for a Lithuanian Embassy abroad.**

[Meskauskas]**I really do not know and cannot say anything about this.**

[Rameliene] In your opinion, which of the links at the President's Office is the weakest?

[Meskauskas] I do not even know. Sometimes these links may lack coordination. We have three structures: Advisers with their own experts, the economic division, and the chancellery which engages in certain bureaucratic work. Therefore, sometimes we really have slight misunderstandings in our relations. We are trying to overcome them. [passage omitted]

[Rameliene]**How would you define relations between the president and the Seimas [parliament]? Do you not think that there would be fewer problems if you did not live under the same roof?**

[Meskauskas] To a certain degree, yes. The presidential institution would be clearly separated from the Seimas.

We have not had any more serious problems in our relations with the legislature. True, the president rejected a couple of draft laws and sent them back to the Seimas for repeated consideration. However, this is normal—both the parliament and the president can make mistakes.

Eventually, one of the president's duties is to stabilize contradictions among different political forces. It is difficult to achieve this now: Both the community and the Seimas are very much divided. I think, however, that no one could reprimand the president for supporting only one force.

[Rameliene] **Nevertheless, some members of the Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party faction say that it is as if people from the President's Office are trying to raise themselves above the Seimas....**

[Meskauskas] None of us really intends to do so. However, one of the most important principles for the existence of a normal state is a clear and strict division of powers. Thus, we are seeking its implementation. In other words, we want the Seimas, the government, and the president whose functions are quite clearly defined in the Constitution to each do their work and not to interfere with the others.

The president signs draft laws adopted by the Seimas. Thus, his advisers are primarily interested in the logic of these documents. As I have mentioned, it is this logic that they failed to find several times.

[Rameliene]**Have you not had any conflicts with the majority faction because of that?**

[Meskauskas] Not any serious ones. [passage omitted]

[Rameliene]**You have known A. Brazauskas for many years. Do you think that he has changed after becoming president?**

[Meskauskas] Probably not. I particularly appreciate that he has remained sincere. He praises us rather seldom, but we are not small children. If something is wrong, he tells about this immediately, without beating about the bush. He has always been exacting and industrious.

In general, his life over the past several years has not been easy. While in the opposition, he was spited on and berated by anyone who would take the trouble. All this left a certain impression on him as if suppressing his vitality. The president is indeed a very lively person by nature.

False Bomb Alert Disrupts Landsbergis Meeting

WS1403210294 Tallinn BNS in English 1820 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] Vilnius, Mar 14, BNS—A false warning about a bomb placed inside the culture center of the Lithuanian town of Ignalina interrupted a public meeting with Vytautas Landsbergis, leader of the Lithuanian parliament's rightist opposition.

The opposition's spokeswoman confirmed that a policemen came into the auditorium of the center at the very beginning of the meeting and announced that an unidentified person threatened with a bomb explosion.

The police searched the entire building but found no explosives. No more incidents occurred during the remaining part of the gathering.